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# **RACES OF AFRICA**

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# RACES OF AFRICA

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The map (Fig. 1) appearing on p. 16 does so by permission of Professor Bernhard Struck; Figure 2 is based on a diagram by Passarge, with trade routes in part adapted from maps by the late Lady Lugard and by Bertholon and Chantre, while the Bantu line is taken from Struck. The preparation of the book owes much to Miss P. H. Puckle, who has also compiled the index, while Mr. L. J. P. Gaskin, Librarian of the Royal Anthropological Institute, has assisted with many references, and Miss Tildesley, of the Royal College of Surgeons, with skull measurements.

Those published works that have proved especially useful are indicated by an asterisk in Appendix I.



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

THE author of a volume such as the present is from the very beginning confronted by certain difficulties, which it is well that the reader should appreciate in order to make the necessary allowances and corrections. It is obvious that questions of race should first and last be determined by the study of physical characters, yet in no part of Africa is there in existence anything approaching an anthropological survey (based on such characters), nor can it be said for any considerable area that even the first rough survey work has been done. If our ignorance is not quite so dense on the cultural side, even here there are vast unsurveyed areas and uncharted tribes; on the other hand, we do possess a moderate number of excellent monographs dealing with particular peoples, and with each of these as a nucleus for its own region it is sometimes possible to work out a reasonable scheme for certain areas. On the linguistic side things are rather better, but language—helpful as it may be—is itself no safe guide to race. Yet the study of the races of Africa has been so largely determined by the interest in speech, and it is so much easier to acquire a working knowledge of a language than of any other part of

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man's cultural make-up, that names based upon linguistic criteria are constantly applied to large groups of mankind and, indeed, if intelligently used, often fit quite well. Hence, in describing the great racial groups of Africa, terms such as "Bantu," which strictly speaking have no more than a linguistic significance, are habitually employed, and in this volume linguistic criteria will play a considerable part in the somewhat mixed classification adopted.

The second obstacle consists in the presentation of the material, and the necessity to rely on words alone to bring definite physical types before the mind of the reader without the help which, in a larger and more costly volume, would be rendered by photographs and drawings. While this difficulty cannot be avoided it seems possible to lessen it by the careful definition in this introductory chapter of such terms as "tall," "short," "round-headed," "broad-nosed," etc. It will also be advisable to point out that a few words are used in a technical sense. Thus, "clan" signifies a group recognizing descent in one line (whether patrilineal or matrilineal), within which inter-marriage is not allowed, such groups being combined in one larger unit, usually the tribe. "Totem" refers to an animal or plant species of which *all* (individual) members are considered of one blood with *all* the members of a human group (generally coinciding with a "clan" as defined above). "Fetish," so common a word in books on West Africa, is purposely avoided; at best it represents a particular aspect of

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animism, the belief in separable indwelling spirits in animate and inanimate objects, including some made by human hands. It will be well to add that religion, to which we shall so often refer, has in Africa no necessary connection with morality as we understand the term ; it is not in fact a moral code externally imposed and controlled, and for the most part embodying a revelation, but rather an explanation of the facts of existence and a commentary on life controlling action, the beliefs and practices which it embodies being simply part of the texture of daily existence. There is usually nothing comparable to our ideas of the retributive justice of a God, punishing evil and rewarding good, and where any such idea appears it is important to exclude Christian and Muhammadan influence before accepting it as part of the African scheme of things. It is even probable that such undeveloped beliefs as that of the Kru that the souls of the good ascend the heavens via the Milky Way, which is the path of ghosts, may be due to foreign influence.

The chief criteria of race are the following : colour of skin, quality of hair, stature, head-shape, character of face including prognathism, and shape of nose.

Colour is defined by the terms in ordinary use.

Hair is generally recognized as of three kinds, i.e. "straight," "smooth, wavy or curly," "woolly."

Stature.—Here it is well to be precise. Following A. C. Haddon, the terms "short," "tall," etc., will be used, wherever measurements are available, in



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accordance with the following table. Measurements will be given in inches, because the majority of people in this country are not accustomed to think in metres and centimetres, but for those wishing to supplement their reading a conversion table of heights between 5 and 6 feet is given as an appendix.

|           |   |             |                   |
|-----------|---|-------------|-------------------|
| Pygmy     | . | -58½ in.    | (-1.48 m.)        |
| Short     | . | 58½-62½ in. | (1.48 m.-1.58 m.) |
| Medium    | . | 62½-66 in.  | (1.58 m.-1.68 m.) |
| Tall      | . | 66-67¾ in.  | (1.68 m.-1.72 m.) |
| Very tall | . | 67¾ in. +   | (1.72 m. + )      |

That there is a considerable range of stature in most peoples is obvious, but here, as in other measurements, averages of groups of thirty or forty individuals come remarkably true ; moreover, a tall race will not (apart from dwarfs) contain very short individuals nor a pygmy race tall men.

Head-shape.—Looked at from the side some heads will be seen to be long, others short (the hair must be discounted), while seen from above such heads look long and (more or less) round respectively. The various degrees of this distinction in shape are expressed by the Cephalic Index (living) or Cranial Index (skull), which is the ratio (or percentage) of the breadth of the head or skull to the length, the latter being taken at 100, i.e.

C.I. —  $\frac{B \times 100}{L}$ . Except in artificially deformed

heads it is uncommon for this figure not to fall between 65 and 90, and the vast majority fall between 70 and 85. The terminology commonly applied to this index (skull) is :

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- 75, long, or dolichocephalic.
- 75–80, mesaticephalic
- 80 + round, or brachycephalic.

The difference of the index taken on the living and on the skull is about two units, hence the cephalic index can be converted into the cranial index by the subtraction of 2, and vice versa.

Character of face, prognathism.—Though a number of indices are in common use for the face it does not seem necessary to discuss or use them in this volume. We are so accustomed to looking at faces that the terms “broad-faced,” “long-faced,” are self-explanatory, while all must have noted the varying projection of the forehead and cheek-bones (malar bones). Projection of the lower part of the face, especially of the lower jaw (prognathism) is common in Africa, and where it is extreme there may be definite “snoutiness.” This is generally, and no doubt correctly, regarded as a “low” character, its opposite, “orthognathism,” especially when allied with a prominent forehead, being considered “high” from the intellectual standpoint. But it should be noted that many negroes have bulbous foreheads without being particularly intellectual, while the least developed races, with infantilistic crania, may be relatively orthognathous.

Nose.—The nose may be long or short, broad or narrow, with its bridge flat, medium, or projecting. The relation of length to breadth is so important that it seems well to give the terms and figures commonly employed, and since there is no morpho-

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logical identity of the nasal indices taken on the living and the skull, and no easy mode of conversion of one to the other, only the figures for the living are given. The index is again  $\frac{B \times 100}{L}$ , and the terms applied are :

|        |   |   |   |              |
|--------|---|---|---|--------------|
| 55-70  | . | . | . | leptorrhine. |
| 71-85  | . | . | . | mesorrhine.  |
| 86-100 | . | . | . | platyrrhine. |

Noses that are broader than they are long (hyperplatyrrhine) are not very uncommon among negroes. This index has proved of special use in areas in which the population is of mixed origin, e.g. East Africa. The development of the root of the nose is important (low, medium, high), as well as certain forms of the nose. Here most of the terms are self-explanatory, but it should be noted that the so-called "Jewish" nose though often called "Semitic" is not truly so, since the purest Semites have it not ; it is characteristic of the ancient Hittites and their modern representatives the Armenians ; it should be called "Armenoid," and where present in a typical form—at any rate in Africa—may fairly be taken to indicate the admixture of Armenoid blood.

These then are the limited, and, at least outwardly, relatively simple criteria that we shall use to study the races of Africa and their constituent peoples in this book. If a definition of race be sought it is scarcely possible to say more than that race connotes "a group of people who have certain well-marked physical characters in common," and

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that, though at the present day there can be few pure races in existence, for descriptive purposes we can treat a race as "pure" unless there is reason to believe that it has arisen from more than one source in relatively modern times.

Within these limitations the great divisions of mankind inhabiting Africa, its "primary" races from the standpoint of the distinctness of each from the others and their importance, are as follows :

- |                 |   |                             |
|-----------------|---|-----------------------------|
| (1) Hamites     | } | these have a common origin. |
| (2) Semites     |   |                             |
| (3) Negroes.    |   |                             |
| (4) Bushmen     | } | sometimes known as Khoisan. |
| (4a) Hottentots |   |                             |
| (5) Negritos.   |   |                             |

It must, however, be remembered that one race, the Semitic, apart from a certain amount of mixture in Abyssinia, has only been present in Africa for little over 1,000 years.

The distribution of the languages spoken by these great divisions is well shown in Professor Struck's map reproduced on page 16. A comparison of the linguistic areas defined on this map with the details given in each chapter will roughly indicate how important a part linguistics play in our classification, and it is on account of this importance that the following brief diagnosis of the character of the prime languages of Africa are given.

The Hamitic languages are inflected : nouns have grammatical sex-gender, which with number and case is expressed by suffixes ; verbs are conjugated by both prefixes and suffixes and have a number of

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derivative forms, e.g. intensive, reflexive, causative, etc.

The Semitic languages so closely resemble the

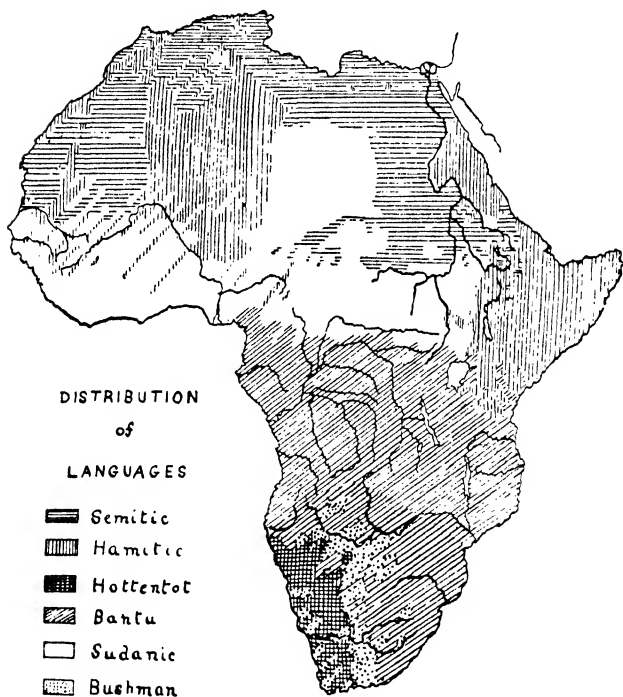


FIG. 1.

Hamitic (inflexion, grammatical sex-gender, etc.) that there can be no doubt that they are closely related (and may indeed be considered to have a not very remote common ancestor), but they differ

## INTRODUCTION

in that the Semitic have "triliteral roots," i.e. "the root of a verb (which is found in the third person singular of the 'perfect' tense) normally consists of three consonants, as in the Arabic *qatala* 'he killed,' *nasara* 'he helped' . . . Verbs consisting of more than three consonants are either 'derived forms' or of a later formation; those with only two radicals are probably contracted. These triliteral roots are peculiar to the Semitic family."

The Negro languages, i.e. those spoken by the true Negro, and also by many other blacks (e.g. the Nilotes), are generally termed Sudanic. Attempting to define these we may say that all words are built up on a monosyllabic basis, that there is an absence of inflexion—including grammatical gender—and that the genitive is placed before its governing noun. None of these three criteria must be taken too absolutely—languages of a perfectly pure type are rare—but, broadly speaking, the Sudanic languages all tend to exhibit the above three features, so that ignoring exceptions and traces of borrowing which we find in individual languages we may hold to the criteria given. Among the most typical Sudanic languages are those of the West African Twi and Yoruba. Here the greater number of words, and especially the verbs, are simple monosyllables, consisting of a consonant followed by a vowel, which, as Ellis points out, are like the syllables in a child's first reading book: *ba*, *be*, *bi*, *bo*, *bu*, etc. But since the number of such combinations is limited, the languages of these Africans have become tonic,

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i.e. the Negro has hit on the same expedient for modifying sounds and multiplying meanings as the Chinese: the pitch of the voice being used to change entirely the meaning of a word. Thus, *da* with a low tone means "throw," with a high tone "cruel"; *do* with a low tone, "to be sad," but with a level intonation, "sleep."

The Bushmen languages cannot be adequately characterized in the present stage of our knowledge. They are largely monosyllabic, lack prefixes and grammatical sex-gender, but make extensive use of suffixes, particles and reduplication. Their "clicks" (p. 26) are proper to themselves to the extent that they exist in no other languages except those of the Hottentots and some Bantu (also the little-known Sandawi of Tanganyika), to whom the Bushmen have communicated them.

Hottentot is nowadays regarded as Bushman, with certain characteristics, e.g. sex-gender, due to Hamitic admixture.

Nothing is known of any language proper to the Negritos.

Of the divisions of the races of Africa given on p. 15, Nos. 1, 3, and 4 are by far the most important, indeed it would not be very wide of the mark to say that the history of Africa south of the Sahara is no more than the story of the permeation through the ages, in different degrees and at various times, of the Negro and Bushman aborigines by Hamitic blood and culture. The Hamites were, in fact, the great civilizing force of black Africa from a relatively early period, the influence of the Semites being late

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and in the main confined to the "white" areas north of the Sahara inhabited by Hamitic peoples.

Turning to geographical factors, the sketch map (Fig. 2) on pp. 20-21 shows in a very summary and diagrammatic manner some of the main features of Africa that are of importance as conditioning or explaining the distribution of its peoples. Here are no great mountain ranges to obstruct free communications, and the real difficulties of the continent—as explorers have always found—are its deserts and forests. In the north the Sahara in the main separates Negro-land from the Mediterranean populations. The highland steep-edged massif of Abyssinia, with a strip of rain forest (not shown in Fig. 2) on its western edge, has acted to a considerable extent as a barrier to the spread of Negro tribes into this part of Abyssinia. The Nile-Congo watershed, with its narrow zones of rain forest on the banks of the north-flowing tributaries of the Bahr-el-Ghazal, though only 1,500-2,000 feet high, has proved an efficient obstacle to the western extension of the Nilotes. The remains of the Bushman tribes still cling to the barren uplands of South-West Africa and the Kalahari desert. The distribution of the domestic animals and therefore the mode of life and the politico-economic system, can also be correlated with the type of country. Thus, only camel-nomads can exist in the Sahara, apart from oases, while cattle are not to be found in the tropical rain forest but constitute the most important element in the life of the Bantu and half-Hamites of the South and East African mountain savannahs and parklands.



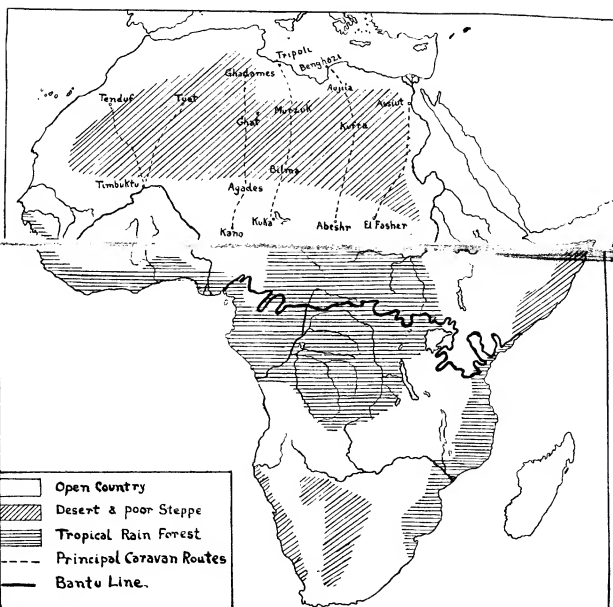


FIG. 2.

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In conformity with the point of view set forth on p. 18 we should first describe Negritos and Bushmen—the most primitive of Africans—then Negroes and Hamites, and after these such peoples as the Hottentots, Bantu, etc., who have arisen by mixture of these races. Actually the Hottentots so closely resemble the Bushmen that in a small work such as this it is inadvisable to separate them, and therefore the order followed will be : Bushmen Hottentots and Negritos, Negroes, Hamites, hamiticized Negroes (half-Hamites, Nilotes and Bantu), Semites.

No mention will be made of the remains of the older forms and species of African man, related to those of the Old Stone Age of Europe, which have been discovered of late years, nor of the myriad stone implements of palæolithic age that have been found in North Africa (including Egypt), Somaliland, and in South Africa. We shall even ignore recent archæological finds in East Africa which may prove the key to discoveries of the greatest importance. It will, however, be well to point out that though the Bushman has persisted to the present day he belongs to a type so ancient that he may well have been in Africa for a period to be measured in tens of thousands of years, and until less than a hundred years ago was using stone tools of the same type as were being made in Europe during the later period of the Old Stone Age.

It will be obvious that this book is intended to be read with a map, or rather with the African portion of the best atlas available. It is for this reason, and to facilitate reference, that political and

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geographical boundaries are cited even where they have no ethnic significance.

The signs used before certain native words in Chapter II and at the end of Chapter IV, e.g. //gauab, are conventional signs for particular clicks.

## CHAPTER II

### BUSHMEN, HOTTENTOTS, AND NEGRITOS

It is generally agreed that the Bushmen reached their present habitat in South Africa from the north, their ancestors having perhaps occupied the greater part of tropical East and East-Central Africa. In support of this view may be cited the discovery of "Bushman" rock-paintings in Tanganyika Territory and of perforated stone spheres—typical Bushman digging-stick weights—there and even in Uganda and the Southern Sudan. In spite of this there does not seem to be any valid reason for regarding them as closely related to the Negrillos of the Central African Forest, though as is but natural this view has been held fairly widely; on the other hand, there seems no doubt that the recently extinct Strandloopers of the south and western coast of Cape Colony were but a group of Bushmen who adopted a special mode of life, with consequent modifications of culture, suitable to the narrow coastal zone in which they settled.

Stow held that there were two great divisions of Bushmen, each with its characteristic modes of life and art, viz. cave-dwellers (painters) and kopje-dwellers (sculptors), the latter producing their works by "pecking" the rock face on which they worked

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with a bluntly pointed stone or perhaps natural pebble. This view seems to be mistaken and probably lays far too much stress on differences in technique due preponderantly to environment.

The former extension of the race over practically the whole of South Africa is shown by the distribution of its relics, especially rock-paintings, skeletal remains, and even place-names. Apart from isolated offshoots and stray individuals their present range is restricted to the central and northern portions of the Kalahari Desert, and the northern half of South-West Africa. It is only here that their original mode of life has been retained, and even these groups have been affected racially and culturally by contact with the Bantu.

The Bushman is so distinctive in appearance as to be distinguished at a glance from all other Africans, save only the Hottentot. He is short, averaging about 60 inches (and therefore not pygmy), with slightly built well-shaped limbs and small hands and feet. The skin is yellow or yellowish-brown, and wrinkles particularly easily; the hair of the head is sparse, and becoming rolled into small tangles assumes the so-called "peppercorn" appearance. The head is mesaticephalic, low in the crown; the face is orthognathous and flat, with prominent cheek-bones, very flat nose, and bulging forehead. The eyes are narrow, often slightly oblique, the lobe may be absent from the ear. The usual forward curvature of the lower end of the spine is exaggerated, making the buttocks specially prominent, and with the women there is often that

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considerable accumulation of fat on the buttocks and thighs to which is given the name *steatopygy*. In the north greater stature, darker skin, and larger head and face, go with admixture of Bantu blood.

It must ever be a subject of regret that the social habits of these interesting people were not properly observed and recorded some three generations ago, before the aggression of White Man and Bantu had combined so to reduce their numbers and break down their organization that much of the highest scientific value has been lost for ever. For this reason an attempt has been made in the following pages to give a fairly full summary of what has been saved, it being held that the intrinsic interest and importance of the Bushman warrants an allocation of what might otherwise be regarded as an undue proportion of the limited space of this work.

Linguistically the Bushmen are divided into three main groups: Southern, Northern, and Central, each comprising a number of separate tribes. Each tribe speaks its own language and has its own name. So little is agreed concerning the Bushman tongues that no short statement of their grammatical peculiarities is possible, but all have the celebrated "clicks" (Arbousset, an early French missionary, speaks of them clucking like turkeys), really suction sounds whose nature will be best understood by saying that the lateral click is the sound that is sometimes used among ourselves to urge on a horse.

The Southern group, formerly occupying Cape Colony, is almost extinct; the Northern group centres in the north-east of South-West Africa and

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includes the relatively well-known Heikum, Auen, and Kung, while the Central (Kalahari) group includes the Naron (Aikwe), Tannekwe, Hukwe, Galikwe, and Hiechware (Tati, Masarwa).

The social organization and culture of the Bushmen is of the most primitive. They live in small communities or hunting bands consisting as a rule of from 50 to 100 persons. A number of these bands, united by a common name and language, form a tribe, but the tribe has little importance in regulating social life, and the bands are completely independent and autonomous. Within the bands the only division is into families, consisting each of a man, his wife or wives, and their dependent children. The life of the band is usually directed by the older and more experienced men, and although among some of the north-west tribes each band has an hereditary chief he has no judicial authority and his influence is slight and concerned mainly with the carrying on of war and hunting.

The Bushmen do not practise agriculture nor do they keep cattle, but obtain their livelihood by hunting and gathering edible roots and vegetables. This mode of life makes them necessarily a nomadic people, and each band claims the hunting rights over a particular stretch of territory of which they know and respect the exact limits. Their dwellings are crude semi-circular shelters of branches put up by the women, generally near a waterhole; each family has its own shelter. Their chief weapon is the bow and poisoned arrow, the poison being obtained from snakes, plants, and among the

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Kalahari tribes from the grub or chrysalis of a small green beetle. Throwing-sticks and spears are also employed as instruments of hunting, as are traps, snares and pitfalls. Gathering vegetable food is mainly women's work, for which a pointed digging stick, sometimes weighted with a perforated stone, is used. Fire is obtained by fire-sticks. The food is usually shared by all present, but a man has the right to the skin of any animal killed by him, and from this he makes the clothing for himself and his family.

Clothing is scanty. The men wear a three-cornered piece of skin drawn between the legs and tied round the waist, the women a small apron in front and a larger one behind ; both sexes also have cloaks of skins sewn together. All women and children, and the younger men, wear ornaments, usually chains made of ostrich egg-shell beads. Some tribes adorn themselves with black and red paint, chiefly on the face, and tattooing (for ornament) is also practised, ash being rubbed into the wounds. Among the Naron the old men tattoo a successful hunter in return for an offering of game.

Initiation ceremonies for girls at puberty are common to all Bushmen, but corresponding ceremonies for boys appear to be restricted to the northern tribes. Circumcision is not practised, though the Hiechware have adopted this custom from their Bantu neighbours. At puberty the special tribal marks are cut on the foreheads of the boys by the medicine-man, and they are then kept secluded for a month or two, during which time



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they live a life of hardship in the bush and are instructed in the lore of the tribe. A period of seclusion in her hut and the observance of certain food taboos is also part of the ceremony for girls, and among the north-western tribes a religious dance, known as the "eland bull" dance, in which the male performers tie elands' horns or imitations thereof to their heads, is performed in their honour. After initiation, boys and girls are considered marriageable.

Monogamy is the general rule, though polygamy is not forbidden. Marriage within the band is forbidden in the northern tribes, and a man must seek his bride from a neighbouring band. On marriage he must make her a present of a *kaross* (skin cloak), and among some tribes he must shoot a buck and present it to the bride's parents or to the bride for a marriage feast. The young couple usually live with the bride's people for the first few months. Children belong to the father. Widows generally remarry, and the second husband is then responsible for her children; but if she does not remarry, her husband's brother is expected to help support them. Brothers and sisters must avoid each other's company when grown up, as must mother-in-law and son-in-law.

Birth generally takes place in the bush, the child being nursed by its mother until three or four years of age. Should a second child be born before the first is weaned it is usually killed, and large families are therefore rare, three children being the average number.

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When a death occurs the corpse is buried near the hut in a sleeping position, lying on its side with the knees drawn up. All a man's possessions are buried with him. Stones are laid on the grave to keep animals away, and the band then moves to another locality, abandoning the spot for a couple of years.

Medicine men and women are found among all Bushmen. Their most important function is rain-making and the regulation of the initiation ceremony for boys; they are also the doctors of the community, their favourite curative method being to draw out the disease and cast it away. They do not live or dress differently from the rest of the band and at the present day do not seem to have much influence.

Our knowledge of religious beliefs and customs of the Bushmen is very limited. They all pray to the Moon, and to other celestial bodies, and have a series of myths and legends relating to them. They also believe in certain mythical beings—known variously to different tribes as Cagn (the mantis), Gaunab, Huwu, Hishe, Tora, etc.—who appear to be personifications of natural forces, especially those producing rain, and are frequently invoked. Some of these beings are credited with creative powers and are met with in various myths of origin. Food taboos and certain hunting observances are recorded from some of the northern tribes, and among all the Bushmen there is a well-developed ritual relating to animals and other sources of food, but little of this ritual is known in detail. The folklore of their fathers is being rapidly forgotten.

They are a cheerful, merry people, with a passion-

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ate love of dancing, which among all tribes is common both as a social amusement and in connection with religious rites. Many of these dances take the form of masquerade, for the race possesses extraordinary powers of mimicry, and they are able to reproduce with accuracy the appearance, manners and cries of the animals or persons they wish to represent. At one time the wearing of a skin was a common ruse to permit approach to game, as depicted in the well-known rock-painting in the Herschel district of Cape Colony where a Bushman is seen wearing an ostrich skin while stalking a flock of these birds. They all sing, though their tunes are not easy for Europeans to distinguish, and they have various musical instruments, the most prevalent being variants of the musical bow.

The culture of the southern Bushmen is notable for the paintings and engravings which in the past they executed on the walls of caves and rock shelters. The paintings are naturalistic, often polychrome studies of high artistic merit, and many are of comparatively recent date. Among the subjects depicted are cattle-raids, dances, and magico-religious scenes in which animal-headed human figures are represented; but for the most part the artists recorded the animals which they hunted and upon which they subsisted. Although the practice of the art seems to have died out completely (among the northern tribes apparently it never existed) there is ample evidence to prove that these widely distributed rock-paintings were the work of Bushmen. At the present day almost the only form of

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decorative art found consists of incised patterns on the ostrich egg-shells used for storing water.

No amount of contact with more advanced civilizations has altered the Bushman's primitive mode of life or induced him to assimilate European or other native culture, to practise trade, domesticate animals, or cultivate the soil. Although Bushmen are employed to a considerable extent by farmers as herdsman, etc., and when decently treated make honest and faithful servants, they seem unable as a race to adapt themselves to their altered conditions and are rapidly diminishing in numbers. When deprived of their liberty they die like flies. The herds of wild game on which they subsisted have vanished from the plains, and forbidden by the severe game laws to touch what remains, the survivors of the ancient owners of the land are being driven to a precarious vegetable diet. At the arrival of the white man in South Africa the Bushman was already being forced from his ancestral hunting grounds by his stronger Hottentot and Bantu neighbours, against whom he waged a losing battle. The colonists continued the process of dispossession, making permanent settlements and destroying or driving away the game, and when the Bushmen retaliated by plundering the invaders' herds, set about a ruthless war of extermination which has left in existence only a few scattered and dwindling remnants of this ancient people.

The physical characters of the Hottentots are

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for the most part those of the Bushmen, the chief points of difference being a taller stature (about 63 inches), a longer and narrower head, and a rather more prognathous face. Apart from Bantu admixture in certain groups there is little doubt that the Hottentots are the result of the mixture of Bushmen with early invading Hamites, from whom they received those linguistic and cultural features which distinguish them from Bushmen. It is generally held that the mixed race arose in the north, perhaps in the neighbourhood of the Great Lakes, and that the Hottentots did not reach South Africa until after the Bushmen, crossing the upper waters of the Zambesi and reaching the west coast, then pressing forward to the south where they were found by the first Europeans to visit the Cape.

The former distribution of the Hottentots comprises practically the whole of the western part of South Africa from the Kunene River in the north to the Cape Peninsula in the south, and extends inland to the Kei River. At the present time, while scattered remnants are found over a considerable part of this territory, the tribal organization is met with in any state of preservation only in South-West Africa north of the Orange River. Although many tribes existed, all spoke one of four closely related languages, and it is from these latter that the customary division of the Hottentots into four main groups—Naman, Korana, Gonaqua, and Old Cape-Hottentots—is derived. The survivors in South-West Africa belong to the Naman group,

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and here there is still a considerable number, over fifteen thousand being recorded in the census of 1926. The old Hottentot population of the Cape has become largely absorbed by racial admixture with incoming Europeans and East Indian slaves, and has thus constituted the basis of the present "Cape Coloured," "Griqua," and "Rehoboth" half-breeds.

The Hottentots are a passing people, and only a remnant of their former customs and beliefs survives. The only group whose social organization is at all well known is the Naman, of whom careful study has been made by Mrs. Hoernle from whose account the following sketch is largely drawn.

The Naman consist of several groups or "tribes," each with its own name and chief but bearing the common name of Nama and traditionally descended from one line of ancestors. Each tribe claims certain large fountains or pools as its property, and used to wander from fountain to fountain seeking pasture for its stock. The tribe is composed of a number of patrilineal and exogamous clans, one of which claims seniority, the chieftainship of the whole tribe being hereditary in this clan. The head of the senior clan is accorded a good deal of respect, but he cannot do much without the co-operation of the heads of the other clans, and the conduct of affairs in the tribe is in the hands of the old men generally. The tribe is not a centralized unit, and though occasionally the whole tribe camps together and at such times the clans camp in definite order round the huts of the chief's

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clan, as a rule the families composing a clan tend to live together in various parts of the tribal territory. Each family has its own hut, where the children remain until they are married, though sometimes marriageable girls will share a hut together.

The kinship system is classificatory in principle. One term is applied to all grandparents and one to all grandchildren, sex being distinguished by grammatical suffixes; ortho-cousins are called by the same terms as brother and sister, but cross-cousins are distinguished, and marriage was formerly permitted with the cross-cousin. There is a special term for mother's brother and another for father's sister. The relative ages of the person speaking and the person addressed are carefully recognized in the terminology.

Culturally the outstanding difference between Bushmen and Hottentots is that the former are hunters and food collectors only, while the latter are a pastoral people, with herds of long-horned cattle and flocks of fat-tailed sheep. They also differ from the Bushmen in practising the art of smelting iron for the manufacture of implements, blades of spears and arrow-heads; they make pots and other vessels from wood, sometimes with incised designs, weave mats and baskets from reeds and rushes, and from skins make bags as receptacles for milk and water. On the whole, therefore, their material culture is superior to that of the Bushmen. They do not, however, appear ever to have possessed the art of painting or engraving on rock, in which the older and more primitive race excelled.

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The principal food of the Hottentots is milk, which they keep in wooden pots and dishes and drink after allowing it to thicken. In contrast to most Bantu tribes of South Africa the milking is done by the women, not the men. They supplement their milk diet by vegetable foods—roots and berries and the *!naras* melon, and by hunting and trapping animals; their methods of hunting are similar to those of the Bushmen, though their snares are more elaborate and they no longer use the bow and arrow. They do not kill their cattle for food except on the occasion of a feast, though animals that die through natural causes are eaten. In recent years their flocks have diminished and they have taken in a small way to agriculture. They are to some extent nomadic owing to the necessity of fresh pasturage for their flocks and herds, but they do not wander about so freely as the Bushmen and their encampments are of a more permanent nature.

The encampment is enclosed in a circular fence of thorn in which are two gateways, one to the north, the other to the south, the huts of the people being ranged clan by clan round the inner side of the fence and the cattle herded in the centre, with special enclosures provided for the calves and lambs. The huts, of beehive shape, are much superior to those of the Bushmen and are constructed of supple pieces of undressed wood planted in the ground, the tops bent inward and tied by thongs to short pieces laid horizontally, so that the frame forms a rough hemisphere; withies are



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twisted round the structure, over which are laid layers of rush mats. The floor is smeared with a mixture of cowdung and blood. The inmates sleep on mats round the centre hearth. On shifting camp the structure is taken to pieces and transported on oxen to the site of the next encampment.

Clothing (now generally European) formerly consisted entirely of skins, prepared by softening and scraping. The men wore a loin cloth of hide, with perhaps a small cloak, the women a well-ornamented skin apron with larger cloaks hanging down before and behind. Skin caps and sandals are occasionally worn. Both sexes adorn their heads with copper trinkets and paint their bodies with ochre and fat ; the women wear ornaments of shells, etc., and strips of raw hide sewn round their legs, while armlets of copper and ivory are worn by the men. No form of bodily mutilation appears now to be practised, although early writers speak of the excision of one testicle and the amputation of the joint of the little finger.

Marriages are arranged by the parents of the two parties concerned, the girl's people being required by custom to make a show of reluctance ending, after persuasion by the boy's people, in acquiescence. During the period of betrothal the boy and girl may not communicate with one another except through an intermediary. The marriage is celebrated by a feast, provided by the bridegroom's parents—although the bride's parents sometimes contribute—and on the day of the wedding the husband and wife each present their respective

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mothers-in-law with a cow, in token of the fact that she has nourished their spouse as a child. Marriage is usually patrilocal, and the reception of the bride into her husband's group is the occasion of a feast, in which only the married women take part, symbolizing the reception of the girl into the community of married women.

A man must treat his wife's mother with the greatest deference; they are said to be shy of each other, and he must never look at her when addressing her.

The wife is the mistress of her hut and all its domestic utensils. She does the milking, and when the husband wishes to have milk he must ask her for it. In general it appears that the women have a good deal of independence and are far from being dominated by their husbands.

The levirate is practised, i.e. a widow is inherited by a brother of her deceased husband.

A pregnant woman is subject to a number of taboos; for instance she may not be present when any animal is being slaughtered, as this is supposed to affect her child adversely. Suckling is prolonged, but it does not appear that infanticide is practised if a second child be born before the first is weaned, as is the case among the Bushmen. Boys are named after their mother, girls after their father, so that all children of the same sex bear the same name, age distinctions being indicated by the use of additional qualifying words. Each child is allotted a special cow by his parents, and the milk from this cow is reserved for him.

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Although formerly the aged were abandoned to perish of hunger, in family life respect for age is inculcated, and deference and respect must always be paid to elders. Thus the eldest brother has the honoured place and the first voice in any debate. There is, however, a strong taboo between brothers and sisters when once grown up, and they must avoid one another completely; a brother must never speak to his sister directly, be alone with her in the hut, or speak of her except in the most respectful terms :

“ The highest oath a man could take, and still takes, was to swear by his eldest sister. A man can never address his own sister personally; he must speak to another person to address the sister in his name, or in the absence of anybody he says so that his sister can hear, ‘ I wish that somebody will tell my sister that I wish to have a drink of milk,’ etc. The eldest sister can even inflict punishment on a grown-up brother if he omits the established traditionary rules of courtesy and the code of etiquette.”

This relation between a woman and her brother also affects the relations of children with their father’s sister or mother’s brother respectively. The father’s sister is treated with much deference and respect, but on the other hand the greatest liberties are allowed with the mother’s brother; a boy can do almost anything at his maternal uncle’s home without being blamed for it, and can take without asking any specially fine animals from among his uncle’s herds without the uncle having any redress.

The ceremonies attached to such transitional

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phases as birth, puberty, marriage, remarriage, disease, etc., afford admirable examples of those rites called by Van Gennep *rites de passage*. In normal Hottentot society every person belongs as it were to a definite stratum, the members of which have definite duties, know exactly their place and the correct manner of behaving both towards their mates in their stratum and to those either below or above it. A person in a "state of transition" from one stratum of society to another is said to be *!nau*, i.e. in a condition of taboo, dangerous both to himself and to all with whom he comes in contact. Thus, when a child attains the age of puberty he is no longer a child but neither is he a full member of the tribe, and so for a period he belongs nowhere but is removed from the solidarity and security of his former position and exposed to great peril. He is accordingly made to pass through certain ceremonies, the object of which is to initiate him with the least possible delay into the group of persons who are already in the same state as that which he has now entered. The essential aspects of these ceremonies are summed up as follows by Mrs. Hoernle :

" In childbirth, marriage, puberty, or bereavement rites, the new status has simply to be recognized, acknowledged, and the necessary steps taken to protect the individual and the society by receiving the man or woman into the new group to which he or she belongs. This is done by the preparation of a sacramental meal in which only persons duly qualified are allowed to share. In the other group of crises, a stage preliminary to the sacramental meal is necessary. The *!nau* person has first to

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be identified with the new group by injecting some of the 'essence' of that group into him. This is done by making incisions in some part of his body, the part varying with the crisis, and injecting a concoction of which one ingredient is invariably some of the grease and dirt scraped from the body of the officiating person. This is the practice in remarriage, in the puberty ceremonies of boys, in the reception into the rank of hunters, in the treatment of diseases which are regarded as !nau, etc. . . . The next stage in both groups is the renunciation of all that represents the old life, after a period more or less prolonged of complete seclusion. The individual must be reborn. There is a special cleansing of the !nau person's body by the individual officiating, after which a totally new set of clothing is put on. . . . At the same time the house is thoroughly purified and what might be called an 'expiatory' meal is eaten. For this meal but one animal is killed, and of it none but the !nau person and persons who can no longer become !nau may partake. Finally there is the careful reintroduction of the person to all the familiar daily tasks which have been so long laid aside, and so life begins again with all the solidarity of the new group behind its new member."

The transition rites, though varying in detail, have one feature in common, that the person must on no account touch water. Owing to the arid nature of their country and the uncertainty of the supplies on which their flocks and herds depend, water is endowed with a peculiar potency and sanctity by the Hottentots, and while in the normal routine it is used with little regard to ceremony it acquires on critical occasions a twofold significance, becoming on the one hand a source of protection to the tribe, and on the other hand a danger to those who are for one reason or another in a critical

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condition. Thus, cold water is a source of great danger to a *!nau* person; he must on no account come in contact with it, and after purification he must be reintroduced to it with much ceremony, being splashed all over by some qualified person. As an example of its powers may be cited the Hottentot witch-doctor, who never washes nor touches cold water from year's end to year's end. His potency resides as it were in the dirt and grease of his body, and this is always an ingredient in his medicine. Should he touch water his power would be diminished, and a Berseba witch-doctor who had been using his power for evil was ducked in the pond by the chief's orders and his magical powers thereby completely lost. His medicine can also be rendered innocuous by immersion in cold water. Similarly, to splash oneself with water gives protection from ghosts, and cold water is poured on a grave "to cool the soul of the deceased" and keep him from troubling. When a whirlwind comes sweeping through a kraal and passes by a hut the inmates rush inside, get cold water, and throw it in the path of the wind; did they not do this some one would surely die. Another indication of the vast importance attached to rain by the Naman is found in the annual rain ceremony, the most important social event of the year, when the whole tribe assembles, and ewes in lamb which would on no account be killed at any other time are sacrificed in the interests of fertility and abundance.

The transition rites are well illustrated in the

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puberty ceremonies for girls. Ceremonies for boys seem to have lapsed since big-game hunting became impossible, but a girl when she first shows signs of puberty undergoes an elaborate ritual. She is at once cut off from the ordinary life of the kraal, is confined in a small dark hut built inside her mother's, must lie there quite still wrapped closely in her sheepskin blanket, and must not speak above a whisper. She is, however, visited by her friends, who grind sweet-smelling leaves and bark into powder for her and with this powder she is copiously covered. All the time she is in the hut she must not touch cold water and must be protected in many other ways. When she is ready to come out, a matron who has been a successful married woman and reared many children, but who is now past the age of child-bearing, and who has taken charge of the girl all through her seclusion, scours her body thoroughly with melted butter and wet cowdung to cleanse her of her "child dirt." The girl is then given a complete set of new clothing and led into the outer hut by the matron, with whom she prepares a meal for the other women assembled to receive her. The matron must hold her hand and aid her with each thing she does. So she is made free to cook and prepare a meal once more. Similarly she is reintroduced to all her daily tasks by the old woman. They gather wood together, collect roots and berries together, and the old woman supports the girl's arm while she milks—this milk is *!nau*, and can only be drunk by the old woman and others of her age. In the evening

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when the time comes to fetch the evening supply of water the girl goes accompanied by the old women, the matron walking just in front of her and another old woman just behind, in single file. Arrived at the water the woman takes a branch and splashes the water over the girl, whose legs she also rubs with wet mud. Finally both of them take a branch and strike the water. She then fills the girl's bucket and her own, places one on the girl's head, and they return home. This reintroduction of the girl to cold water marks the end of her state of taboo (*!nau*). Hahn states that among some tribes girls who have reached puberty must run about naked in the first thunderstorm, so that their bodies are washed by the rain, the belief being that this will cause them to be fruitful and to have many children; he says that he has himself witnessed this running in the thunder rain, when the roaring of the thunder was deafening and the whole sky seemed to be one continual sheet of lightning.

There do not appear to be any *!nau* ceremonies for persons marrying for the first time, but similar rites and precautions are observed when a man or woman remarries, and after a death not only the near relatives but also the larger family circle are affected and have to undergo ceremonial purification. When a child has died, both parents become *!nau* and have to be dealt with similarly.

At death the corpse is wrapped in skins, which are sewn together. The relatives and friends spend the night together outside the hut in which the



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corpse is laid, and carry on a ceremonial wailing, the body usually being buried the following afternoon. The grave is dug with a niche on one side, in which the corpse is nowadays placed on its back with the head towards the west ; formerly it was always buried in a sitting position facing east. The niche is closed with bushes and a slab of stone, and a mound raised over the grave ; on this every one present places a stone or twig. Formerly the hut of the deceased person was deserted, and the camp moved, but nowadays the hut is moved to another part of the camp, and even this is not always done. On returning from the grave the relatives wash their hands in water in front of the dead man's hut, and wail and writhe in lamentation (nowadays they sing hymns). The man's relatives then slaughter animals according to their means, all the different families providing pots in which the blood, meat and entrails are collected separately. The blood is heated to boiling point, mixed with a certain herb, and stirred till the steam rises, when the relatives gather round the pots and cover their heads with their skins until they perspire. An old man, not a relative, takes potblack and makes a line on the stomach of each person. The relatives eat only the flesh, the other members of the kraal the entrails, while only the old man officiating and others of like age use the blood. These rites take place in the dead man's hut and the widow takes no part. A widow or widower is *!nau* for some time after death, during which time uncooked meat or cold water

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must not be touched, neither must they go among the cattle nor handle pots. The period of mourning is brought to a close by a thorough cleansing, followed by a meal and a ceremonial introduction to water and the duties of daily life, as in a girl's puberty ceremony, though with variations in detail.

In Hottentot mythology and religious practices there are found what can best be described as hero-gods, apparently derived partly from animistic beliefs and partly from the personification of natural forces producing rain. Of these the most frequently met with are Tsui-//goab, Heitsi Eibib, and //gauab or gaunab. The last of these (also met with among the Bushmen) is nowadays (probably owing to missionary influence) regarded as "the devil," but originally denoted the spirit of a dead person, sometimes also taking the form of the ill-omened whirlwind, and Mrs. Hoernle has recently shown that there is a strong connection between //gaunab and the /hei /hun, "the ghosts which hover over the graves or come from them," much dreaded by the Naman. In their mythology //gaunab is regarded as a malevolent being, always in conflict with Tsui-//goab—the great tribal hero to whom they pray for rain and food—who destroys him, but he comes to life again, and one form of the legend implies that the fight is an annual one. Heitsi Eibib is a mythical hero, believed to have lived on earth and to have died and risen again many times, and tales of his wonderful deeds were widely narrated and implicitly believed. All the actions ascribed to him were those of a man, but

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of one endowed with supernatural power. His "graves," large mounds of stone, are found all over the country, and no Hottentot will pass one without adding to it a stone or a branch, sometimes also muttering a prayer for good luck in hunting.

Moon worship seems to have been prevalent among the Hottentots at one time, as it is among the Bushmen, but the cult has apparently died out, though the moon figures prominently in one of their myths, where it is associated with the origin of death.

While the above description of Bushmen, Strandlopers, and Hottentots, written some ten years ago, still holds good, recent discoveries in South Africa render it necessary to refer to a particular type of human remains, represented by the Boskop skull found in the Potchestroom district of the Transvaal.

The Boskop remains, which have by some been thought to represent substantially the undifferentiated ancestral type of Bushman, Strandloper, and Hottentot, consist of a fairly complete skull-cap, the right temporal bone, much of the lower portion of the left lower jaw, and some fragments of limb bones. A reconstruction by Sir Arthur Keith indicates a large, massively constructed skull (certainly of no other species than *Homo sapiens*), platycephalic, with a cephalic index of about 75. The forehead exhibits characteristically Bushman features, while a number of peculiarities associated with the mastoid area further certify to the close relationship of

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the Boskop type to the Bushman-Hottentot stock. Other features present in the lower jaw point in the same direction. Whether the Boskop skull in fact represents an undifferentiated Boskop-Khoisan type, or, as is perhaps more probable, is itself a derivative with the Khoisan of a less differentiated proto-Boskop type, is uncertain. Whichever be the case, it is now appreciated that the type itself is of enormous importance in the anthropology of South Africa, since skulls with well-marked Boskopoid characters are being found widely distributed and in increasing numbers. As a summary of its relation to the Bushman type we may quote Keith :

“ The Boskop type, if not a direct ancestor of the Bushman, yet stands near the line which evolved into this type. Occasional Bushmen possess large heads of the Boskop type. One example recently described by Professor M. R. Drennan, of Capetown University, had a skull which exceeded the Boskop specimen in all dimensions. . . . Unfortunately nothing was known of the mental ability of this massive-brained Bushman.” (Arthur Keith, *New Discoveries relating to the Antiquity of Man*, 1931, p. 123.)

It should be added that the Boskop skull is important not only on account of its Khoisan characters, for if Keith is right it has features that affiliate it with the Negro type.

As might be expected, the pygmy Negritos of Africa, often called Negrillos, present a number of problems of the highest interest, while there is no human group of whom less is known. Thus not only are we ignorant of their social organization,

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but no one has yet been able to discover whether they have a language of their own, all recorded vocabularies belonging to the speech of their negro neighbours. Hunters, trappers, and collectors, they are nowadays confined to the thickest tropical forests within  $6^{\circ}$  north and south of the Equator, but the folklore of Africa and classical tradition alike point to their much wider distribution a few thousand years ago. The story of the annual invasion of the country of the pygmies by cranes on their winter flight is at least as old as Homer, and such combats are not uncommonly represented on classical works of art, while long before this, in the Pyramid Age (i.e. in the third millennium B.C.) the Pharaohs were sending south—but certainly not so far south as the Congo Valley—for pygmies to dance before them. Harkhuf, a noble of Assiut and one of its most experienced caravan leaders, made four journeys to Yam, i.e. at least as far south as Upper Nubia, when besides “every good thing” he brought back a “dancing dwarf. . . . from the land of Spirits.” The news preceded his return, so that the Pharaoh wrote to him to come immediately bringing the pygmy with him, directing him to take the most minute precautions for his safety :

“Come northward to the court immediately ; . . . thou shalt bring this dwarf with thee, . . . from the land of spirits, . . . to rejoice and gladden the heart of the king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Neferkere, who lives forever. When he goes down with thee into the vessel appoint excellent people, who shall be beside him

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on each side of the vessel ; take care lest he fall into the water. When [he] sleeps at night appoint excellent people, who shall sleep beside him in his tent. . . . My majesty desires to see this dwarf more than the gifts of Sinai and of Punt. If thou arrivest at court this dwarf being with thee alive, prosperous and healthy, my majesty will do for thee . . . according to the heart's desire of my majesty to see this dwarf."

More modern accounts of the pygmies indicate why they were such favourites ; Junker writes of their amazing talent for mimicry :

" A striking proof of this was afforded by an Achua whom I had seen and measured four years previously in Rumbek, and now again met at Gambari's. His comic ways and quick movements made this little fellow the clown of our society. He imitated with marvellous fidelity the peculiarities of persons whom he had once seen ; for instance the gestures and facial expressions of Jussuf Pasha . . . and of Haj Halil at their devotions, as well as the address and movements of Emin Pasha ' with the four eyes ' (spectacles) . . . and now he took me off to the life, rehearsing after four years, down to the minutest details, and with surprising accuracy, my anthropometric performance when measuring his body at Rumbek."

Physically this race is truly pygmy, stature varying from about 52 to 57 or 58 inches, with an average (Johnston) of 57 and 54 inches according to sex. Their skin may be reddish, or yellowish-brown or very dark, the body often covered with a light downy hair. The head tends to brachycephaly, with a cephalic index of about 79 ; nose very broad with little or no bridge, eyes rather large and prominent ; face short, tending to be broad and generally prognathous, often to such a degree that

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the late Sir Harry Johnston proposed the term "pygmy-prognathous" for a group comprising these little people and certain low-type forest Negroes. Steatopygy is said to occur, though it can scarcely be said to be obvious in any of Johnston's or Schebesta's photographs.

They live in small communities; Junker speaks of coming "suddenly on about fifty little Akka huts which stood close together in the forest."

They hunt with bows and poisoned arrows, and, though regarded as cunning and revengeful, generally live on good terms with the surrounding Bantu tribes—to some degree their overlords and protectors—whose languages they speak and with whom they exchange game for bananas, maize, etc.

On the sociological side our knowledge of the pygmies has recently been increased by the observations of the Reverend Paul Schebesta, who has travelled much in the pygmy country for the express purpose of getting to know something of the habits and customs of these little people. In spite of their excitable temperament and sudden gusts of rage he found them always friendly.

Totemism seems widely spread, perhaps universal, and the relation of the individual pygmy to his clan animal is typical of the belief:

"Sometimes one gets the impression that pygmy clans actually believe that their totems were their ancestors. And most pygmies believe that after death they will be metamorphosed either wholly or partially into their totem animals. . . . In all the five camps in which I stayed I could trace the same basic principles of totemism. . . .

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The Abfoka clan's totem was the 'Butiu' bird, the Aforaka's totem was the chimpanzee, while the Mantu clan had two totems—the 'Solio,' an aquatic animal, and the 'Sasu' plant. . . . The favourite totems are the leopard and the chimpanzee.

"All the members of a clan must show the deepest reverence for their totem. On no account must it be killed or injured in any way, and, of course, it must not be eaten. A pygmy dare not even eat or drink from a vessel that has been touched by his totem." (Paul Schebesta, *Revisiting my Pygmy Hosts*, 1936, p. 141.)

In spite of these typical forms of behaviour, clan exogamy is not obligatory, though marriage within the family group is avoided as constituting incest. Circumcision, which is widespread, seems to have been adopted from the neighbouring Bantu.

Any discussion of the religion of the Negrillos is rendered difficult, owing to the known presence of Bantu and even Hamitic influence. If we attempt to eliminate all possible outside elements not very much is left. Yet, since no people adopts from foreign religion forms incongruous with its own mental make-up, we may provisionally regard the following ideas and practices, described in Father Schebesta's publications,<sup>1</sup> as constituting the religion of the pygmies, even if in part introduced.

There seems to be little of the ancestral cult so common among the Bantu negroes, rather do the pygmies stress the existence of a power associated with the firmament—sometimes regarded as a

<sup>1</sup> It is only fair to Father Schebesta to indicate that no scientific account of his investigations has yet been published, and that this summary is taken from two works written in pronounced popular form and style.



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creator-god and sometimes as having the appearance of an old man with a long beard—the Lord of the hurricane, lightning, and rainbow. Sometimes he is given a name, at others termed “Grandfather.” To him offerings are made; for instance, part of the heart of a slain animal or portions of honeycomb. Among the Efé group, invocations are addressed to this being, known to them by the name of Tore, who made all things and to whom everything ultimately belongs. Thus, before hunting, “Tore give me food,” while it is Tore who takes the dead to himself and who kills evil-doers with his lightning. There is also a cult of the moon.

At the present day, pygmies bury in a grave with a side recess, thus copying the local Bantu, but it seems that of old the body was left in the hut of a near relative and the group moved to another site.

Concerning the vexed question whether there is a pygmy language or whether the pygmies all speak the Bantu of their negro overlords, Father Schebesta regards Efé as the aboriginal pygmy tongue of the Ituri forest-dwellers, though admitting that an enormous amount of borrowing, especially as regards vocabulary, has taken place.

With regard to the position of the Negrillos in the natural history of man, while some authorities regard them as having arisen from their taller negro neighbours (by what can only be called degeneration), this view is not generally accepted, and in fact seems untenable. Rather should they be considered to represent an early human type “infantilistic” both physically and mentally.

## CHAPTER III

### THE TRUE NEGRO

THOUGH the Negro is no doubt one of the oldest stocks in Africa, no negro skulls of any considerable age have yet been discovered, indeed an accepted authority has written of the earliest appearance of Negroes in history as taking place during the great period of Egyptian expansion, about 1500 B.C. This, however, is scarcely accurate, or only becomes so if special definitions be framed for "history" and "Negro," for on one of the great proto-dynastic slate palettes dating from *circa* 3200 B.C. are represented captives and dead with woolly or frizzly hair and showing the same form of circumcision as is now practised by the Masai and other negroid tribes of Kenya Colony. Thus, though there is not, and cannot be, any record of skin colour, there is every reason to believe that these men were as much "Negroes" as many of the East African tribes of the present day to whom this name is commonly applied. Moreover, the Archæological Survey of Nubia has brought to light a burial—with typical negro hair—dating to the Middle Kingdom (about 2000 B.C.), while four negresses were found in a single cemetery dated as far back as the late pre-dynastic period—say about 3000 B.C.

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Ethnically Africa may be divided into two portions by a line drawn from the mouth of the Senegal River through Timbuktu to Khartum, thence southwards and westwards to the Abyssinian border at about  $12^{\circ}$  N., from here following the western and then the southern border of Abyssinia to the Juba River and from the Juba River to the Indian Ocean. The northern division is essentially white or light skinned, inhabited by Caucasian Hamites and Semites; the southern essentially Negro, with peoples almost everywhere characterized by their dark skin and frizzly hair. But though this line marks out the northern boundary of the Negro with a fair measure of precision it must be realized that the term "Negro" includes at least three huge groups, each with its peculiar characteristics. Almost everywhere in this vast area the Negro carries in his veins a greater or lesser proportion of hamitic blood and has been influenced by hamitic culture. The true Negro is mainly confined to the neighbourhood of the Guinea coast, including Nigeria and the French Sudan with some part of the Cameroons and perhaps the Congo. The rest of negro Africa consists of Negroes hamiticized to a varying extent: on the one hand the Bantu, on the other the Nilotes and "half-Hamites."

West Africa, the home of the true Negro, may be regarded as extending from the mouth of the Senegal River, about  $16^{\circ}$  N., to the eastern boundary of Nigeria. So defined, its eastern boundary coincides with the northernmost limits of the Bantu along the lower course of the Rio del Rey. Politic-

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ally, no part of Africa is more confused, consisting as it does of a series of enclaves stretching back from the coast, each originating in a coastal trading centre established between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries and now belonging alternately to France and Great Britain, with a single remaining Portuguese possession and the Liberian Black Republic of liberated slaves to add to the confusion. It is necessary to emphasize these facts since they explain the origin of such terms as "Slave Coast," "Gold Coast," and render intelligible the arbitrary division of the country by the Powers irrespective of local ties or tribal association. These enclaves—from north to south and then westwards—are Senegal (Fr.), Gambia (Br.), Portuguese Guinea, French Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, the Ivory Coast (Fr.), the Gold Coast (Br.), Dahomey (Fr.), and Nigeria (Br.), all extending inland and embedded as it were in that great portion of Africa commonly called the French Sudan.

In our present state of knowledge the first classification of the tribes of the blacks of this vast area must be linguistic, and here, from Senegal through the Guinea coast and Southern Nigeria and occupying the hinterland from west to east, are found a large number of important language groups, each constituting a unit, though all belonging to the Sudanic family. A concrete example is furnished by the Guinea Coast, where the Twi-, Ewe-, and Yoruba-speaking peoples succeed each other from west to east ; each of these linguistic groups consist of a number of tribes with more or less similar

## THE TRUE NEGRO

customs, and the members of all three groups themselves exhibit a substantial identity in their basic beliefs and habits of life.

According to Haddon the main physical characters of the true Negro are a black skin, woolly hair, a tall stature averaging about 68 inches, moderate dolichocephaly (average cephalic index 74-75), a flat broad nose, thick often everted lips, and frequently a considerable degree of prognathism. Culturally they possess some characteristic features. They build gable-roofed huts; their weapons include bows tapering at each end, with bowstrings of vegetable products, swords and plaited shields, but no clubs or slings; among musical instruments are wooden drums and a peculiar form of guitar—the so-called West African harp—in which each string has its own support; clothing is of bark-cloth and palm-fibre, not of skin. Secret societies, masks, and wood-carvings of the human figure are characteristic, while coiled basketry and head-rests do not occur. Cattle are absent, the domestic animals being the dog, goat, pig and hen; the plants originally cultivated were beans, gourds, bananas, and perhaps earth-nuts. Cannibalism occurs, and human sacrifice, which was common, might attain a huge scale as in Ashanti. Circumcision and the knocking out of the upper incisors may occur.

On the artistic side the true (West African) Negro shows a skill in plastic art that is hardly found elsewhere in negro Africa, the carved ivories, wooden and ivory masks, and bronzes of Benin being especially noteworthy. Here, on the capture of

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the city in 1897, were found many carved elephant tusks, and bronzes cast by the *cire-perdue* process, including some, such as the well-known bronze head of a young Negress in the British Museum, showing high artistic feeling and great technical skill. The finest of these are to be assigned to the sixteenth century, and though undoubtedly negro in execution must be taken to show European, i.e. Portuguese, influence. Indeed, many of the bronze plaques portray Europeans or Negroes with guns, while some of the ivories can only represent objects of European manufacture.

Secret societies are so important in West Africa that some description must be attempted, though obviously it is impossible to deal with the subject at all fully in the space available. It is first necessary to realize that the term "secret society" is used to denote a large variety of associations which often have no common function. Even the element of secrecy varies enormously, i.e. from a society to which any male may belong on payment of the usual fees, to an association with an elaborate ritual of initiation, possibly a private language, and a particular ceremonial and symbolism, the whole sometimes directed to purposes that are not only illegal from the white man's standpoint but are anti-social from the point of view of the Negro. It must, however, be admitted that the latter form of secret society is in the minority, and it must be remembered that the majority of secret societies are mutual benefit clubs, membership not only conferring social distinction but being regarded as a

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reasonable method of employing the wealth of a rich man and of benefiting the poor. Among the Yoruba the most important are the Ogboni and the Oro, while in Dahomey the cult of Yewe approximates to a secret society. In Calabar, in the east the Ekkpe is the most influential, with grades varying from six to eleven in number; it has judicial functions, and those who resist its findings are executed. In the west the so-called "Poros Bush" of Mende, Bulom, and Temne—which, perhaps, was known to Ptolemy, the geographer of the second century—besides being judicial in its functions is associated with the leopard; and it is worth noting that the Human Leopard Society, which has in the past caused considerable trouble to West African administrators, seems to be only a particular example—in the least desirable form—of a West African secret society. Masks are often associated with secret societies, and, as already mentioned, secret societies and masks are two of the cultural features distinguishing West Africa from East Africa. It is noteworthy that the titles of some of these societies are derived from occupational guilds, one of the highest titles being that of "blacksmith." In spite of all that can and has been said against secret societies, it must not be forgotten that in the majority of instances they are probably more beneficial than harmful. For example, the much abused Poro society will taboo fishing when there is danger of the waters being fished out, and by the exhibition of the Society's signs will prevent the destruction of a crop and the digging of yams in the wrong season.

## RACES OF AFRICA

On the whole it is probably fair to regard secret societies as the most important single economic and political factor in West African culture.

As already stated, the lower and middle portions of the Senegal River form the ethnic divide between Hamites and Negroes. Immediately south of the river the latter are represented by the Wolof (or Jolof), who, with the Serer, occupy most of the territory between the Senegal and the Gambia rivers. With these Senegalese must be included the Tukolor, and such Mandingo tribes as the Bambara and the Malinke, constituting a great group of dolichocephals, with a cephalic index of 74-75 and with generally broad noses (N.I. 93), though relatively narrow noses occasionally occur, perhaps due to miscegenation. Apart from the Serer, said to stand nearly 69 inches high, they are generally only moderately tall, with a stature of about 66½ inches, the Malinke and Tukolor exceeding this by perhaps 2 inches. The Wolof, besides occupying the seaboard between St. Louis and Cape Verde (including Dakar) and the south bank of the Senegal, extend inland for a considerable distance. They are said to be the blackest and most garrulous of African peoples (their name being variously explained as meaning "speaker" or "black"). Most Wolof are nominally Muhammadan, a few Christian, but pagan rites are observed and offerings are made to household deities, the most popular, the lizard, having in many houses a bowl of milk set aside for it daily. The Wolof have three hereditary castes—nobles,



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tradesmen, and the despised musicians and slaves. The old kingdom of Cayor, the largest of the Wolof states, has been preserved by the French, the king being elected from the ruling family.

The country of the Serer, between the Gambia and Salum rivers to the south of Cape Verde, formerly included territory east and north of their present home, so that they were at one time neighbours of the Tukolor, and formed part, with the Wolof, of their Empire ; the languages of the three peoples thus show many similarities and traces of borrowing. They have also mixed with the Mandingo, to which race most of their ruling families belong. The Serer have the reputation of being extraordinarily tall, but actual measurements hardly bear this out. They are less black than the Wolof, but have coarser features.

The Mandingo—more correctly Mande—constitute one of the most important groups of French Senegal. They occupy most of the region between the Atlantic and the Upper Niger as far south as about latitude 9° N., and include such large and important tribes as the Dyula, Kassonke, Jallonke, Bambara (more correctly Banmana), Soninke, Malinke and Vei. The typical Mandingo are described as tall and slender in build, with finer features, fuller beard, and lighter skin than the neighbouring populations, indeed it is claimed that they hold a position in the French Sudan analogous to that of the Hausa in Northern Nigeria and are thus destined to a position of increasing importance in the French Sudan of the future. If this is so it

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constitutes an interesting example of time's re-  
venges, for in the district of Manding, the original  
home of the Mande-speaking peoples, lies the site  
of the famous mediæval city of Melle which, in the  
thirteenth century, and especially under Mansa-  
Musa (1311-31), became the capital of the most  
powerful Sudanese state of which there is authentic  
record. Only in 1500, when Melle was captured by  
the Songhai king, Omar Askia, did the Melestine  
Empire cease to exist.

The Bambara (or Banmana), besides having a  
clan organization, attach much importance to their  
castes or occupational guilds, such as the Semono  
(fishermen), Numu (smiths), etc.; these caste-  
names are found among other Mandingo people,  
who tend to be distinguished by their occupation-  
name rather than by that of their tribe. Some clans  
are associated in a peculiar relationship commonly  
known to anthropologists as the "joking relation-  
ship," in which although bound to render each  
other assistance in case of need, the common mani-  
festation of their alliance is the right to insult one  
another publicly—it might almost be said cere-  
monially—without giving offence.

Circumcision of boys and excision of girls is  
general, the operation being performed at about the  
age of ten, as among the Malinke, and only after  
this ceremony are the young people full members of  
the tribe. Both sexes go clothed, and tribal face  
scars are found as throughout the group.

The Bambara are essentially agriculturists, living  
in small villages, sometimes consisting of one family

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only, in cylinder-huts with conical straw roofs. In each community the religious and civil power is usually combined in one individual, the *dugutigi*, the "master of the land," traditionally the descendant of the first settler, though in the case of recent migration he may be elected by the community. He is the high-priest of the village, the one person who can propitiate the local spirits and by making them offerings obtain their goodwill and protection. The office is hereditary, passing from brother to brother, and then to the eldest son. Although in some villages there may be a second chief for administrative and political purposes the power of the latter is purely civil, and the *dugutigi* remains supreme in all matters concerning the allotment of land, as well as in spiritual affairs.

The Bambara have been little affected by Islam, and retain their animistic beliefs and ancestor worship. Each village has its presiding spirit (*dasiri*) or divine ancestor, usually resident in a tree, at which sacrifices are made and prayers offered by the *dugutigi* on all important occasions; conical altars of earth, on which is placed an earthen vessel, also serve as shrines. When the *dasiri* leaves his sacred tree he is thought not to set foot upon the ground but to mount a special animal—serpent, lizard, rat, donkey, or even goat—which, on account of its office, is also sacred, and is allowed to wander freely through the village helping itself to what it wants.

The Songhai dominion, of which mention has been made on p. 62 lasted until the French took Timbuktu; but the fall of the kingdom did not

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greatly affect the two million folk constituting the Songhai nation and occupying the country south of that city and the great bend of the Niger. They are essentially Negroes who have absorbed much hamitic blood, yet in spite of miscegenation with Tuareg and Fula they are in every respect one people, with a single speech and Islam as their religion. Physically, the Songhai are moderately tall, with a stature of about 67 inches. They are long-headed, with a cephalic index of 75·5, their Caucasian blood being especially obvious in their relatively well-formed noses, which on the average scarcely reach the lower limit of platyrrhiny, with an average nasal index of 83 in the male and 85 in the female. Other evidence of their foreign blood is to be found in their skin colour, which is described as coppery brown, never of the dark, almost black, colour of the negroes of Dahomey and the Gold Coast. Their hair, however, is always woolly.

In continuity with the Songhai, and reaching to the head waters of the Upper Volta, are the Mossi, Gurunsi, Tem, Barba or Borgu, and other similar tribes, who while they have to a considerable extent withstood Muhammadanism have nevertheless been infiltrated by Fula, Songhai, and Hausa influence.

The Mossi comprise a large portion of the population of French Africa, where they centre round Wagadugu and extend into the North-west Provinces of the Gold Coast. They appear to have reached their present home in the basin of the Volta from the east, merging with the indigenous population and forming a homogeneous people so far as lan-

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guage and culture are concerned. In the middle of the fourteenth century Mossi, Dagomba, and Mamprussi were united under one leader and for a short time were in possession of Timbuktu. The government is centralized, and the districts with their villages are grouped into administrative or vassal provinces under chiefs appointed by the king, who resides at Wagadugu with his ministers, consisting of the chiefs of the five provinces, and numerous hereditary court dignitaries.

The Mossi are agriculturists, with millet as the staple crop. They possess few cattle, but good horses and many donkeys. They are pagans: ancestor-worship plays a large part in their religion and sacrifices are offered in sacred groves. They have an esoteric cult of the sun and moon practised by a religious fraternity wearing masks, and the priests of this cult throughout the year tend the sacred fire, kept alight in a small recess in the wall of their hut and associated with a (new-fire ?) ceremony at the end of the rains.

To the south of the Mossi are the Gurunsi (Grunshi), a general term given by the Mossi to such closely related tribes as those speaking Nunuma, Kassena, Sissala, and Nankani (all dialects of one language), resembling the Mossi in many ways in their mode of life.

Among all these tribes there is the institution of the "father" or "master" of the land, already described among the Bambara (p. 63), which may perhaps be correlated with the existence of a foreign invading aristocracy.

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In the Central (French) Sudan east of the Niger the advance of Islam has swept away or greatly modified the aborigines except along a southern fringe and in a few parts of the Chad basin. The old tribal organization has almost entirely disappeared, and for nearly a thousand years the Central Sudan has been occupied by Muhammadanized peoples gathered together into political systems of some permanence, each with its own language and each to a considerable extent developing a tradition of its own. The Songhai Empire has already been mentioned, and to this might be added the Kingdoms of Bornu, Kanem, and Baghirmi, while the Hausa on account of their importance will be described later in more detail. The Kanembu (the people of Kanem), the Kanuri (of Bornu), and the Baghirmi, cluster round Lake Chad, and here, too, survive such pagan "aboriginals" as the Buduma of Lake Chad, the Mosgu, and the Mandara who inhabit the swampy region of the Shari basin. The Kanembu (the Beriberi of the Hausa) have no doubt been considerably hamitized, and are perhaps to be related to the Tibu (p. 150), while the Kanuri of Bornu appear to be more distinctly arabized, perhaps with some admixture of Fula blood.

In this group we are again dealing with broad-nosed dolichocephals, somewhat longer headed, it would seem, than the Senegalese group, e.g. the Kanembu have a cephalic index of 73 and a stature of nearly 66 inches, while the pagan Buduma of Lake Chad, who have been considered facially to resemble

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such Nilotes as the Shilluk (p. 171), are some 2 inches taller with a cephalic index of nearly 74.

Little is known of the history of the Felup, more correctly Dyola, a coastal tribe of obscure origin who have spread at the expense of their neighbours from Gambia to the Bissagos Islands. Their name has been used by the Portuguese for a congeries of tribes who fell under their influence, even though some of them have later become Muhammadans. The Felup are described as typical Negroes, with a matrilineal organization, and as worshipping a god associated with the firmament and rain.

In Sierra Leone and Liberia the Mende and Kpelle (Mandingo group), Temne, Bulom, Kissi, and Gola are perhaps the most important tribes. The Bulom have achieved some notoriety as the probable originators of the powerful Poro society, referred to on p. 59.

The Kru, under whom are grouped many kindred tribes such as the Grebo, Basa, Nifu, etc.—numbering collectively about 40,000—are scattered along the coast of Liberia from the neighbourhood of Monrovia to that of Cape Palmas. Although traditionally from the interior—indeed, their language has been classified with the Mandingo of Senegal—they have long been noted as brave and skilful seamen and fishermen, and Kru “boys” are to be found on almost every ship trading on the Guinea coast. Typically negro in features they are of exceptionally fine physique, and are said to be particularly intelligent and enterprising. The Kru are divided into small commonwealths, each with

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an hereditary chief, and are said to have a well-marked system of age-grades. There are also secret societies for magico-religious and judicial purposes, one of the chief being the *Kwi-Iru* ("children of departed spirits"), open to all males except the very young, and presided over by a masked "father."

The Guinea coast is portioned out linguistically between tribes belonging to three great linguistic stocks. To the Twi-Fante, generally called Akan, belong Ashanti, Safwe, Nkoranza, Adanse, Assini, Wassaw, Ahanta, Brong, etc., together with the Agni of the Ivory Coast. The Ewe family includes the Ewe proper of Togoland and the peoples of southern Dahomey. Yoruba includes Nupe and Munshi (p. 83), while Bini and Efik-Ibibio stand outside these groups. The political organization of these people is somewhat advanced, and among them there has arisen a series of relatively highly organized states, such as Ashanti, Benin, Dahomey, and Yoruba.

Among these states the three first are notorious to the general reader for the immense scale of human sacrifice at the yearly "Customs," the festival of the yam harvest and the anniversary feast of the dead. Yet so careful an observer as Rattray writes in the highest terms of the general kindness of the Ashanti, and it is obviously unfair in estimating the position of these tribes to ignore other data. It may even be possible to agree with Keane, who considers that these atrocities are but examples of the fact that most religions have waded through blood to better things.



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Broadly speaking, as Ellis has shown, religion and indeed society generally becomes more advanced passing from west to east along the Guinea coast, i.e. from Twi to Yoruba. In spite of this the next few pages will be devoted to an account of the Ashanti as typical of this area, for the reason that both physically and culturally we know far more about them than about any other West African tribe. It must, however, be realized that the Yoruba are socially more important,—perhaps, indeed, the most important of the tribes of Nigeria.

The following account of the physical characters of the Ashanti is based on the data collected by Rattray, for since his subjects all came from within fifty miles of each other they are obviously more significant than the varying figures published by other investigators. The Ashanti are of moderate stature, the men measuring about  $64\frac{1}{2}$  inches and the women  $60\frac{1}{2}$  inches. They are high dolichocephals or low mesocephals, with a cephalic index of between 77 and 78, and their nasal index, averaging 95 (male) and 90 (female), is perhaps rather less variable than is usual. In fact, the relatively high uniformity of these measurements seems to indicate a particularly homogeneous people, a result perhaps of the geographical seclusion of this part of Africa, with the sea on one side and on the other its rain forest holding off the pressure of hamiticized tribes from the north and east (see Fig. 2, pp. 20-1).

The Twi-speaking peoples generally are divided into exogamous clans, each associated with an animal which in some instances is regarded as con-

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nected with the origin of the clan. The animal is addressed as "grandfather" (*nana*), which is a word of respect and was used in addressing the Ashanti king. Traditional accounts of the origin of the clans are not constant, but the members of one with the parrot as its animal assert that a parrot accompanied their ancestors when they first appeared in the world. Another clan respects the bush-cat, the crow and a certain snake, and its members will not hang up a crow to scare away birds, while in the old days if one of the clan found a crow or bush-cat dead he would bury the animal with a piece of cloth; when their red snake appears it means death to one of the family. Of the leopard clan it is related that when a member dies the picture of a leopard is scratched on the wall of the house and on the coffin, and that the mourners make spots on their bodies with red, white, and black clay to represent the animal; they also paint spots on the neck of the corpse lest if this be not done the deceased become a leopard; when the head of a leopard family is dying a leopard can be heard crying in the bush. Each clan has its own burial-ground and members are sometimes said to change into the totem animal at death. It is noteworthy that some of the chiefs use the totem as a badge, and this custom seems to explain the leopard on the umbrella of one of the chiefs in the coloured drawing of the Yam Custom published by Bowdich over one hundred years ago.

In Ashanti, with a population rather over a quarter of a million, as among the Twi-speaking peoples generally, the king is paramount lord over the pro-

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vincial chiefs and receives tribute from them, the chiefs in their turn exercising authority over the sub-chiefs and headmen of the villages under their jurisdiction. Besides ruling as suzerain the king himself exercises the functions of a provincial chief so far as concerns the affairs of the capital and the villages dependent on it. Each provincial chief is semi-independent, living in regal state in his capital, where he dispenses justice in his own local court, but except in the case of slaves the king alone can order capital punishment. The king is not an absolute monarch, but is controlled to a certain extent by his council, composed of the queen-mother (who is the second person in the kingdom), the chiefs of the most important provinces, and the general of the army, and this council must be consulted on all matters of external policy. The government is thus rather that of an aristocracy than a personal despotism, apart from the power of the king to take life at any time. The military organization is by local areas, generally into town companies with hereditary captains owing allegiance to their provincial chiefs. Each company is known by a distinct title, usually derived from the town-quarter of its members, while the rivalry between the various companies is so keen that the flaunting of a company flag in a quarter belonging to another company would generally lead to serious disturbance.

The royal stool of Ashanti—the well-known “Golden Stool”—came into being during the time of Osai Tutu (1700–30), the fourth known king of Ashanti and the founder of the Empire. In the

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early years of his reign a man named Anotchi arrived in the country and announced that he had a mission from the Sky God to make the Ashanti a great and powerful nation. A great gathering was summoned in Coomassie, and while the air was thick with dust and the heavens terrible with thunder, Anotchi drew down from the sky a wooden stool, partly covered with gold. This stool did not fall to earth, but descended slowly upon the knees of Osai Tutu, to whom and to whose people Anotchi proclaimed that the stool contained the *sunsum* or soul of the Ashanti nation, that their power, their health and their bravery and welfare were in this stool, and that if it were destroyed then the Ashanti nation would sicken and lose its vitality and power. The stool is said never to have touched the ground, nor did any mortal ever sit upon it, and when it was taken to Bantama once every year it was conveyed under its own umbrella and surrounded by resplendent attendants.

That the Golden Stool should be regarded as the palladium of the realm is entirely in accord with negro thought (for another example *cf.* p. 176, where the stool of Nyakang of the Shilluk is described), for in Ashanti each chief has a stool, supposed to be the repository of its owner's soul, and fetters are placed round the central support of the stool "to bind the soul to it." After the death of a wise chief his stool is blackened with soot and yolk of egg and is deposited in the stool-house with those of his ancestors, thus becoming a shrine into which the departed spirit may be called upon to enter on

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special occasions to receive adulation and gifts. Thus in the *Adae* ceremony, a rite observed throughout Ashanti twice in every successive forty-three days, the spirits of the departed clan-chiefs are propitiated and their favours solicited. The chief sacrifices a sheep in the stool-house, the blood is smeared on the stools, and a piece of meat placed on each with a prayer for long life and prosperity, while the minstrels drone the names and attributes of the dead. At this ceremony yams are also offered, and a little rum is poured on each stool.

The Ashanti acknowledge an Earth Goddess, and Nyame, the Supreme God in the Firmament, a remote being whose cult plays little part in the everyday life of the people. From him are derived numerous lesser gods (*obosom*)—of whom the most important is Tano—graded in a descending scale until they reach or almost merge into the class called *suman*, who are among the lowest rank of supernatural powers. But although *suman* and other spiritual agencies are propitiated, by far the most essential, the real working part, of Ashanti religion is a cult of the dead, including dead kings, the most important of all rites being the great festival of the dead, generally (but incorrectly) known to Europeans as the “Yam Custom.” This ceremony was the occasion of sacrifice to the ghosts of the kings, wine and new yams being offered to them by the king with these words :

“ The edges of the years have met, I take sheep and  
new yams and give you that you may eat.  
Life to me.

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Life to this my Ashanti people.

Women who cultivate the farms, when they do so  
grant the food comes forth in abundance.

Do not allow any illness to come."

Only after the spirits had partaken of the new crops might the king and nation eat of them.

The proper title of the ceremony is *Odwira* (*dwira*, to purify, to cleanse), and though uninitiated spectators have laid stress on the amount of intoxicating liquor drunk and of human blood spilt, these features were but incidental to its real purpose. Our best authority describes the rite as "an annual ceremony held in September in honour and propitiation of the Ashanti kings who 'had gone elsewhere,' and for the cleansing of the whole nation from defilement . . . a feast of the dead, very closely associated with the crops and the first-fruits . . . hence the [European] name 'Yam Custom,' by which this ceremony has hitherto been universally described. . . . Not only was it a cleansing of the nation, but the purification of shrines of ancestral spirits, of the gods, and of lesser non-human spirits." He emphasizes the political significance and practical utility of the rite (now no longer held) and its magico-religious aspect, which by entailing the annual presence and participation of the tributary chiefs served as a guarantee of their loyalty and helped to bring cohesion to the many loosely bound factions owing allegiance to the Ashanti king.

The "Yam Custom" was witnessed by Bowdich in 1817 and he has described it in realistic terms, illustrating his description with a most vivid

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coloured plate which every reader should examine for himself.

In Dahomey the death of the king was the signal for the women of the palace to destroy furniture and utensils and then to kill themselves, that they might at once join their lord with his belongings. At the death of Andāzu II in 1789, 595 of these women are said to have perished, in addition to a suitable following of soldiers, Amazons, eunuchs, bards, etc. The annual "Customs," a continuation of the Grand Customs performed at the death of a king, periodically increased the retinue of the departed monarch in the spirit world. Like the Ashanti "Yam Custom," the annual Custom served a political end, the presence of the chiefs being required at the capital. Hundreds of victims also perished yearly as the result of the rule that every act performed by the king must be reported by a messenger to the other world, the message being given to a captive, carefully gagged, who was decapitated after having received a coin and a bottle of rum for the expenses of the journey.

An institution peculiar to Dahomey was the corps of female soldiery, called Amazons by Europeans and known in Dahomey as the "King's wives" and "our mothers." Sir R. F. Burton, who in 1862 saw the army march out of Kana on a military expedition, computed the number of female troops at 2,500 (of whom one-third were unarmed), and attributed the origin of the corps to the masculine physique of the Dahoman women which enabled them to compete with men in enduring toil, hard-

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ship, and privations. Originally the Amazons consisted mainly of criminals, wives detected in adultery and women who had been sent to the king as worthy of death for some misdemeanour and had been drafted into the army instead of being sacrificed at the " Customs " for which criminals were reserved. Under Gezo (1818) the force was reorganized and greatly enlarged, and his successor Gelele had every girl brought to him before marriage and enrolled those who pleased him. The women were sworn to celibacy, though the king had the privilege of taking any of them to wife ; they had the status of king's wives, and could not be touched without danger of death. A particular fetish placed at the palace gate was said to cause pregnancy in all who had been unchaste. In theory they only saw members of the opposite sex when on the march or in the field, and on parade the two sexes were separated by strips of bamboo laid on the ground. But in spite of these precautions, during Burton's visit no fewer than 150 Amazons were found pregnant and brought to justice with their lovers, some being condemned to death. Such women were executed by their own sex within the palace walls.

The Amazons were armed with blunderbusses, muskets, and long razor-shaped knives with an 18-inch blade. They formed the king's bodyguard, and in time of peace one of their duties was to accompany the women of the palace when they went to the well for water, the party being preceded by a bell which was the signal for all men to get out of their path. During the " Customs " reviews and



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manœuvres were frequently held, in which the Amazons took a prominent part, and M. Borghero, who in 1861 witnessed one of these combats, writes of how the bare-footed female warriors were ordered to charge over a bank of thorny acacias and escalate a house covered with a bed of the same thorns, a feat which they accomplished with the utmost dash, dragging back their prisoners to the feet of the king. In battle the Amazons were said to display a ferocious courage ; their chief aim was to carry off trophies of their prowess in the shape of banners, human heads and jawbones, the latter being prized for the ornamentation of drums, etc., and frequently torn from the wounded and living foe. Burton, however, was not impressed by them :

“ They manœuvre with the precision of a flock of sheep . . . and though affecting a military swagger, their faces are anything but ferocious. . . . The officers, distinguished by their white head-cloths, and by an esquire-at-arms, generally a small slave girl, carrying a musket, led their commands. They were mostly remarkable for a stupendous steatopygy, and for a development of adipose tissue which suggested anything but ancient virginity.”

Little is known about the physical characters of the population of Dahomey ; it is, however, clear that though, generally speaking, tall and long-headed, it is far from homogeneous. Particular interest attaches to the Pila-pila of Northern Dahomey, who, if future observations confirm the few measurements already made, may be among the tallest of mankind, i.e. well over 72 inches. Their

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facial resemblance to some of the tribes of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast and to the Nuba of Kordofan may be taken to bear out the suggestion put forward on p. 87 as to the fundamental unity of the "up-country" West Africans and the black hillmen of the mountains of Kordofan and Darfur.

The Yoruba have a cephalic index of nearly 76, which differs but little from those of other Guinea tribes, such as the Ibo with an index rather over 76, the Ibibio (including Efik) of 75, though the Ijaw (of Calabar) have an index approaching 78. The Yoruba, although now occupying a considerable area on the coast, are really an inland people. They hold less seaboard than any other of the big linguistic groups that have been mentioned, and Ilorin District of Northern Nigeria, only comparatively recently Islamized, formerly belonged to this tribe, who by common consent are regarded as the most advanced of the West African peoples. Life and property are more secure, and the Yoruba himself is said to have more independence of character and higher social values than his neighbours. It is not surprising, then, that his towns are larger and that he is a keener trader than the surrounding peoples. Nevertheless, his general attitude towards life is much the same. There is a god in the firmament, Olorun, with many gods under him, among whom Shango the thunder god is one of the most important.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE TRUE NEGRO (*continued*)

FOR the last twenty pages we have been occupied with the tribes of the coastal zone, extending first south and then east from Cape Verde to the Cameroons, a region of swamp, mangroves, and dense forest, with heavy rainfall and almost continuous humidity. Apart from disturbing factors necessarily existing in the neighbourhood of such great rivers as the Niger and Benue, the hinterland becomes progressively less difficult, open forest and "park" country giving place to poor steppe and even semi-desert conditions along the northern borders of the northern territories of the West African colonies, so that the conditions of land and climate gradually approximate those of the Sudan and allow of a modification of the inhabitants due to the infusion of Caucasian blood.

Here, occupying the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast and Nigeria, as well as the hinterland of the Ivory Coast and French Guinea, are innumerable pagan tribes—estimated as numbering some eight million souls in Northern Nigeria alone—as yet but little known, in whose territories have arisen the Muhammadan Fulani Emirates and Hausa kingdoms. In these northern territories it is necessary

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to bear in mind not only the possible fundamental unity of the black hillmen stretching westwards from Kordofan and Darfur, but also to remember the series of Muhammadan kingdoms which in mediæval times spread across Africa from the Nile to the Senegal, for these two factors constitute the background of the present tribal groupings and cultures.

The sketch map on pp. 20-1 showing the main trade routes from the north will give some idea of the possibilities of indirect contact with the Mediterranean cultures, a matter scarcely explored as yet ; it also gives some idea of the main paths of the slave traffic along which black blood trickled into Mediterranean Africa before the mediæval opening of the sea route to West Africa.

The Fulani, because of their Hamitic origin and culture (though they are steadily absorbing more and more black blood), are described in Chapter VI. The Hausa, on the other hand, are essentially Negro, though they speak an Hamitic language. They must not, however, be regarded as a single race, stock, or even people : rather are they a hotch-potch of peoples of various origin, speaking a Hamitic language and recruited indiscriminately from neighbouring tribes. The position will be clear if it is realized that the term Hausa is used to denote (*a*) the Hausa language, (*b*) the country where the main body of the Hausa-speaking peoples are centred (i.e. from Zaria to Katsina and Sokoto), and (*c*) as Hausawa, all those peoples of the Central and Western Sudan who speak the Hausa language as their mother-tongue. Primarily, therefore, the

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term, like "Bantu," is linguistic, but also to a considerable extent religious and cultural, being applied to tribes differing widely in racial characteristics. It should not be confused with the term *Habe*, used by the Fulani of Kano and Sokoto when referring to pagan natives with no Fulani blood (such as the Maguzawa), who in those Emirates are usually Hausa-speaking. In spite of the mixed origin of the nation there is nevertheless a basic distinguishing element in the negroid Hausa :

"The typical Hausa is very black, like most of the central Sudanese ; he is essentially long-headed, and the skull frequently has a pentagonal appearance ; he is markedly less prognathous, less platyrrhine, and less muscular than the West Coast Negro, but is taller, having great length of leg. . . . In character he is much franker and less suspicious than the Fula ; is more cheerful and has a keener sense of humour than the Yoruba."

Numbering about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  million the Hausa are centred principally in the Muslim Emirates of Sokoto, Katsina, Kano, and Zaria, but Hausa towns are found in all the provinces of Northern Nigeria, and socially and economically they may be said to dominate the country, constituting more than one-third of the total population. They are in general excellent farmers and rearers of stock, enterprising traders and skilful artisans, having developed a variety of industries such as leather work and cloth mats ; as carriers they show remarkable strength and endurance, and under British leadership have proved fearless fighters. Islam, with the Sultan of Sokoto as spiritual chief, is at least the nominal

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religion of the majority of the inhabitants of Hausaland, although some Hausa-speaking tribes, i.e. the Abagwariga, are pagan.

In the Middle Ages the Hausa, though never a conquering race, attained great political power. They were then divided into seven states, known as the Hausa Bokwoi (seven Hausa), named Kano, Zaria, Daura, Gobir, Katsina, Biram and Rano, after the sons of their legendary founder. This confederation extended its authority over many of the neighbouring countries, and remained paramount until its conquest by the Fulani in the first decade of the nineteenth century. According to tradition the progenitor of the kings of the Hausa States was one Abayejidu, son of the King of Bagdad, who came with his followers to Daura, where the ruler was Daurama, ninth of a succession of queens. On his arrival Abayejidu, being thirsty, asked for water, and when told that the well was guarded by a serpent called Ki Serki, who prevented the drawing of water, slew the reptile and cut off its head, the queen in her gratitude marrying him. After this the people of Daura spoke no longer of the Queen, but of Mai-Kai-Serki ("the man who killed Serki"), and henceforth Serki came to mean king or chieftain in the Hausa language. This legend is recorded since, on the one hand, it seems to preserve some features of the older organization of the land (matrilineal descent, snake-worship); and on the other emphasises the constant tendency to borrow and greatly exaggerate Eastern connections, due to the increasing prestige and pressure of Islam.

## THE TRUE NEGRO

Turning to the pagan tribes of this part of the hinterland we find innumerable groups of varying size and importance, such as the Jarawa, Jukun, Angas, Gwari, Berom, Munshi, etc., while the Nupe (related to the Gwari) are an important mixed Muslim-pagan tribe in Zaria Province. Of all these people we have little precise knowledge; we can only say that no strong native states or kingdoms have arisen here as they have in the south; rather it seems that throughout a great part of Northern Nigeria the social organization is essentially that of a number of villages united into a single community under a common chief, and this "consolidated group," as Meek calls it, may be coterminous with a tribe or a section of a tribe. But throughout this form of political grouping it is generally possible to discover a unifying influence arising from a sense of kinship, and therefore the possession of a common religious cult intensified by pressure from without. Thus the Warjawa of Northern Nigeria have seven headmen of sections or sub-tribes acknowledging the authority of a chief, who actually has little civil power though it seems that in war he would act as leader. Much the same organization is found in many of the larger tribes, such as the Berom, where the chief is little more than suzerain of the local groups, and sometimes, as among the Angas, derives almost the whole of his authority from his position as religious head, though it is true that he has certain prerogatives such as hunting dues and a proportion of the slaves captured in war.

It is in some such loose organization as we have

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sketched that in this part of Africa paramount chiefs may arise, when a strong man or war leader begins to extend his power beyond his own group, thus originating loose confederacies, which in face of a hostile attack are welded into something approaching a small nation. Such a man was the paramount chief of Bede, who won his position when standing against Fula and Bornu aggression; he then, it is said, made sure of the position for himself and his descendants by removing the important men of the minor groups acknowledging his authority.

Of these tribes the Munshi are said to be the least mixed. They are described as short and thick-set, with a cephalic index of about 76·5, i.e. on the upper limits of dolichocephaly.

As to social organization, Meek remarks on the general absence of exogamy—though some tribes such as the Katab have a clan organization—the normal regulation of marriage being that it is forbidden with known blood relations on both sides of the family. On the cultural side almost the whole of Northern Nigeria is patrilineal, the exceptions being in the south-east of the province, where a number of tribes are matrilineal. To these must be added a tribe, or perhaps a small group of tribes, called Guri, while the Jukun, to whom reference is made below, were matrilineal until a few years ago.

A certain number of tribes, including the Berom and Jukun, identify the sun with the Supreme Being.

Circumcision, universal among Islamic tribes, is also practised by most pagans, though groups that circumcise and groups that do not may be found



## THE TRUE NEGRO

within the limits of a single tribe ; the Munshi appear to have taken to circumcision recently. Among the pagan tribes, as might be expected, circumcision is usually part of a series of initiation ceremonies in which the boys are instructed in the lore of the tribe and taught to be obedient to the old men, corporal punishment being frequently administered during this period. Often the rites are concluded by taking the lads to a shrine and showing them certain sacred symbols. Among the Jukun the novices were led in blindfold ; the bandage was suddenly removed and the initiates were asked what they could see. The correct answer was, " Nothing at all," and it was said that if any novice lost his self-possession and named the sacred objects he was forthwith put to death, for one so lacking in discretion could not be trusted with the tribal secrets. Clitoridectomy and excision of the *labia* is also practised among some tribes in Northern Nigeria, as it is among the Mandingo of the Senegal and the Yoruba and Bini of Southern Nigeria.

The Jukun are among the most interesting of the pagan peoples of West Africa. The most striking of their social features is the semi-divine character of the king : he must not touch the ground with his hands or uncovered feet lest the crops be ruined, while until recently he was ceremonially slain at the harvest festival at the end of seven years' reign, a festival which the king has recently refused to hold, lest in spite of White influence he should go the way of his fathers. But although the belief in the power of the king to control the rain, hence fertility, con-

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ferred on the monarch a position of unquestioned authority, actual administration was largely in the hands of members of the royal family ; in fact there was more bureaucracy among the Jukun than among other pagan tribes of Nigeria. Especially important positions were held at the Jukun court by two women, one of whom was sister in the classificatory sense of the last king and was ruler of the palace women, while her colleague was the favourite wife of the deceased monarch and was thus the reigning sovereign's official " mother " (cf. Ashanti). The king consulted her on all important matters, and she had the right to offer asylum to fugitives from justice. It was these two women who virtually controlled the election of the new king.

So far we have dealt with the true West African Negro and with tribes which in the present stage of our knowledge may be regarded as closely akin. Besides these there are a number of black-skinned woolly-haired peoples who although differing from the West African Negro are scarcely to be regarded as having arisen from a mixture of Negro and Hamite. One such stock is represented by the Nuba of Southern Kordofan, a country presenting in the main a great plain dotted with isolated hills and ranges. At the present day the Nuba are essentially hill people, though it is likely that Arab pressure may have played a part in driving them from the plains. Linguistically the Nuba of the more southern hills are particularly interesting as speaking a language which has been termed " Ban-

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toid," i.e. a language which although not Bantu has alliterative concordance and perhaps an approach to noun classes, thus differing entirely from the Sudanic and hamiticized (Nubian) languages spoken by the more northern non-Arab inhabitants of Kordofan.

Physically the southern Nuba are tall men, with an average stature of about 68 inches, and a cephalic index of 76 to 77. The old statement that these people are related to the Nubians of the Nile Valley is unfounded, nor do they approach them in cultural qualities. Thus, the Nuba men go naked, the women wearing a bunch of leaves before and behind, neither do they circumcise their men nor mutilate their girls. Rather, if an attempt be made to relate the Nuba to other peoples, should the relationship be sought in the south, perhaps with the Bari-speaking tribes of the west bank (p. 167) or in the far west with the black hillmen of the Northern Provinces of Nigeria and the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast (p. 78); it is probably no accident that the cicatrices of the Nuba women, the quartz ornaments they wear in the lower lip, and the unusual structure of their houses, can be closely paralleled in these western areas. Actually we know that people resembling the Nuba inhabit the hills of Darfur, extending as far west as Wadai, so that there is nothing inherently improbable in seeking to carry the relationship still farther west.

It is probable then that many of the other non-Arab races of Darfur and Wadai are largely of the same stock as the Nuba, though in many instances

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there has been an infusion of Arab and hamitic blood. This is specially true of the Tungur and Dargu, two ancient peoples of Darfur, while of the Fur themselves, the people from whom the country takes its name, it is known that they descended from the hills of Jebel Marra in the sixteenth century, so that it is extremely likely that they too were in origin of Nuba stock ; indeed, though nominally Muhammadans, they still have a stone and tree cult so persistent that particular places associated with rocks and trees are regarded as shrines, the local spirit being envisaged as existing in snake form, just as on one of the Nuba hills in Northern Kordofan. The Sultanate of Darfur, which continued to exist until the revolt of the Sultan during the World War led to his downfall, was interesting as the last of the hybrid but predominantly negro states which at one time stretched across Africa north of the forest zone. In spite of the Muhammadanism of its ruling class it was administered rather on the model of an advanced negro society such as that of the Bushongo (p. 204) than on an Arabic model. It is not, however, suggested that there was any direct connection between Darfur and the Congo.

East of Kordofan, Dar Fung, the country between the White and Blue Niles, is inhabited by a number of tribes—Berta, Hameg, etc.—of the same stock as the Nuba, though some of these have been considerably arabized. Their more negro representatives probably link up with such Shangalla tribes (p. 114) as the Kunam and Barea of the Abyssinian borderlands. In the south-eastern corner of Dar Fung

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and on the Sobat River are the Burun, tall almost brachycephalic Negroes, of whose social organization we know nothing.

Another group of Negroes to whom reference must be made are the non-Bantu tribes of the area between the Nile and the Congo and extending westwards north of the Uelle, thus occupying much of the Ubangi-Uelle basin. Here is a group of little-known tribes, including many of the "High Nilotic" group of Westermann (p. 170), speaking Sudanic languages, and whose physical characters seem to mark them off both from the Nilotes and from their Bantu-speaking neighbours in the south. They are essentially mesaticephals, perhaps reaching the lower grades of brachycephaly, relatively short in stature, generally thoroughly Negro in physiognomy, and—though there are exceptions—with a skin which is dark reddish-brown rather than "black." On the cultural side their peculiarities are most readily appreciated by contrasting them with the Nilotes, as in the following table:

### NILOTES.

Herdsmen; cattle are extensively owned and are of the highest importance; barely enough grain is grown to feed the people and make beer.

No cannibalism; human sacrifice very rare or absent.

### MESATICEPHALIC GROUP.

Agriculturists; cultivation the chief occupation of the people, and with poultry-rearing provides food and interest; cattle not kept.

Many tribes cannibalistic; human sacrifice common.

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### NILOTES.

Men go naked, or with a skin suspended over the shoulders; hair of the head often worked up into an elaborate head-dress.

Women wear a leather petticoat from waist to knee in front and behind.

Ivory bracelets are worn on the upper arm.

To the mesaticephals belong such tribes as the Bongo, the Jur (non-Shilluk speaking), the Ndogo, the Azande—though as will be seen, this term denotes a highly composite people rather than a tribe—the Lendu, Momvu, Kaliko, Mangbettu, Abarambo, etc. Of all these the Azande are the least unknown and may be taken as representing this group, though they are no doubt far more vigorous and intelligent than the majority of the peoples just mentioned. They differ moreover from the great majority of tribes of the Sudan and Congo in that they may fairly be regarded as a nation, for they are really a confederation of tribes under a supreme head, or sultan, belonging to a special ruling class,

### MESATICEPHALIC GROUP.

Men clothed with a loin cloth, or a bark-cloth garment sometimes almost amounting to trousers; hair plaited in lines down the side of the skull and (often) worked into "pom-poms" at the end of each plait; hats of woven grass, sometimes decorated with a bunch of cock's feathers.

Women (typically) wear a bunch of fresh leaves suspended in front and behind from a waistcord; sometimes an apron.

Ivory bracelets not often seen.

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each tribe with its territorial sections and chiefs. The ruling class, known as the Avungara, is often, but probably inaccurately, stated to be descendants of one Gura, the ruler of a tribe or clan which some 200 years ago began a process of conquering and absorbing the neighbouring tribes. Actually at the time of the resettlement of the Sudan and of the organization of the Belgian Congo the Azande confederation was pushing both east and west ; it had crossed the Congo-Nile divide into the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and was rapidly eating up the great majority of the mesaticephalic tribes on the northern-flowing affluents of the Bahr-el-Ghazal. It is a matter for speculation what would have happened if it had reached the more open grass country inhabited by the pastoral Nilotes ; certainly its onset would have been by far the sternest test to which the Nilotes have been subjected within the last few hundred years.

On account of the numerous peoples that go to constitute the Azande nation, skin-colour and measurements necessarily vary, indeed the reddish tinge of many Azande has been thought to betoken Hamitic blood. A group measured in the Sudan gave a cephalic index of 79, with a stature of 65 inches ; a larger group measured in the Congo an index of nearly two units lower and a stature which in some small sub-groups reached 69 inches.

Among most of these mesaticephalic tribes the lower incisors are not removed, but some file the upper incisors to a point, as do the Makaraka, a V-shaped notch being filed between the central incisors.

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The Azande have a clan organization. There are many clans, though these have no political, economic or ceremonial functions ; they are however totemic, and at death one soul passes into the totemic animal while another soul is considered to remain in the vicinity of the grave and later goes to join the ancestral spirits near the head-waters of streams. These spirits are the chief agencies worshipped, each homestead having a shrine at which offerings are made. A Supreme Being, Mbole, is recognized, but it seems that he is not invoked, except during periods of drought.

Leadership, both supreme, provincial, and even district, is limited to the Avungara, the political organization of the country being a paramount chief ruling over a tribe, generally defined by river boundaries ; under him are brothers and sons administering provinces, with commoners to act as deputies when desirable.

The Azande now circumcise almost universally, but this appears to be a new practice ; it certainly is so in that part of the tribe in Sudan territory, where the boys spend some six months in a special camp in the bush while they undergo instruction by the older men. There is a number of secret societies, mostly with a wide membership, since the entrance fees are small and there is usually no sex restriction. Little is known about them, but it seems that one of their main purposes is the practice of magic. The Azande appear to be the most eastern tribe who practise the poison-wood ordeal, the actual poison being usually administered to



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fowls and addressed when in the body of the fowl as a personal entity.

Finally, under the heading "Negro," attention must be drawn to a little-known people scattered over the northern and central regions of South-West Africa, often described with the Hottentots because they have taken over many cultural characters from the latter. The Bergdama or Haukhoin (a pejorative term equivalent to "dung people"), more correctly the ǀnu Khoin, "black people," are included in this chapter since they appear to be a group of true Negroes long isolated from others of their stock. They are described as strong, coarsely-built men of medium height, very dark-skinned, with long heads, prognathous, broad-nosed. They speak the language of the Naman group of Hottentots, to whom they have long lived in subjection, and like the Bushmen they do not cultivate but live by hunting and on the wild vegetable produce of their country. The social unit is the patriarchal family, sometimes strengthened by more distant relatives and adherents too weak to fend for themselves. On the other hand, the ceremonial side of their lives seems to have been influenced by Bantu as well as by Hottentots. Thus, although they speak of a supreme spiritual being, // gauab, who is also found among the northern Bushmen and the Hottentot, they have in addition the sacred fire which is so important a feature of the neighbouring Bantu tribes, the Herero and Ovambo :

" Each little group has a sacred fire which must never

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be allowed to go out, but which must be guarded day and night by the chief wife of the patriarch. Day by day when the members of the group go out to seek for food the head of the group and the old men sit guarding the fire, and as long as that is aglow and respected by all, the hunters and collectors will find food for the day. All game must be laid by the sacred fire, and certain portions of it must be eaten ceremonially by the elders of the group. Each kind of berry and root, as it ripens, must be brought to the sacred fire before it can be eaten. All good, all evil hangs upon the guarding of the fire from all impurities, which come from breaches in the regulations as laid down in the traditions of the tribe."

At the present time there may be some twenty-five thousand Bergdama in South-West Africa. In the old days they were essentially mountain people, but it was hardly from choice that they lived there; rather they were driven into the hills by the Herero, who killed them ruthlessly or at best made slaves of their young people, while the *Hottentots*, having obtained firearms, exterminated whole groups. It may be that these Bergdama are the same people who under the name of *Kattea* have been described in South Africa as leading an extremely primitive life.

Many Bergdama are short and thick-set, and one group in the Otavi highlands are strikingly small. The skull is generally long, with a low receding forehead, though some have a high and straight brow, a feature admired and praised in the old songs as resembling the high brow of the wild ox; the nose is broad with sunken nostrils but the occasional appearance of finely cut noses with the form of forehead described above shows that there is consider-

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able foreign blood in the Bergdama. Although they speak Hottentot, there is evidence that their language contains a number of words derived from various "Sudanic" tongues. We may infer then that these people represent an old negro stock which, though stated to have been carried into South-West Africa in the trail of the Hottentots, or perhaps even in part enslaved by them, is more likely to have been there before them. At the present day there are groups living in the villages and possessing goats, other groups living like Bushmen on the spoils of the chase and the fruits of the veld. A settlement usually consists of a small number of houses, perhaps not more than ten, each resembling a moderate sized haystack in a European meadow. On the eastern side is the house of the "great wife," i.e. the first wife of the village elder. All the houses face towards a tree in the centre of the village and not far from this, in front of the house of the "great wife," is the holy fire at which the elders sit and cook those portions of the meat of the bigger game to which they alone are entitled; here too they sit in council, no young man being allowed to approach until he has thrice proved himself a capable hunter at intervals of a year's time. If bad luck in hunting is persistent, or little *veldkos* is found, the suspicion will arise that some one has desecrated the holy fire. In spite of the importance of this fire it is uncertain whether the custom is originally of the Bergdama or has been taken over from the Herero.

## CHAPTER V

### HAMITES (EASTERN HAMITES)

APART from relatively late Semitic influence—whether Phoenician (Carthaginian) and strictly limited, or Arab (Muhammadan) and widely diffused—the civilizations of Africa are the civilizations of the Hamites, its history the record of these peoples and of their interaction with the two more primitive African stocks, the Negro and the Bushman, whether this influence was exerted by highly civilized Egyptians or by such wilder pastoralists as are represented at the present day by the Beja and the Somali.

To emphasize the importance of the Hamites and the part they have played in Africa it is only necessary to refer to the map (Fig. 1) which shows the distribution of languages in Africa at the present day. It will be seen that Hamitic languages are spoken by peoples spread over perhaps one-fifth of Africa, and omitting Hottentot—which contains an hamitic element—Bernhard Struck has been able to classify them into forty-seven stock languages and seventy-one dialects. The area inhabited by people regarded as Hamitic is even larger, including as it does many tribes superficially semiticized under the influence of Islam, for before the Arab expansion

## EASTERN HAMITES

Hamitic languages must have been spoken over by far the greater part of the northern half of the continent.

The Hamites—who are Caucasians, i.e. belong to the same great branch of mankind as almost all Europeans—are commonly divided into two great branches, Eastern and Northern.

(1) The Eastern Hamites comprise the ancient and modern Egyptians (in the latter case recognizing the infusion of foreign blood in the upper classes), the Beja, the Berberines (Barbara or Nubians), the Galla, the Somali and Danakil, and, though mixed with Semites and Negroes, most Abyssinians.

(2) The Northern Hamites include the Berbers of Tripoli, Tunis and Algeria (often conventionally distinguished as Libyans), the Berbers of Morocco, the Tuareg and Tibu of the Sahara, the Fula of Nigeria, and the extinct Guanche of the Canary Islands.

Sergi points out that within such wide-flung groups there is naturally much variation. Among the Eastern Hamites, especially, the cranial characters though variable are, generally speaking, convergent, and are to be regarded as old variations of an original stock. To a great extent this is equally true of the face, which apart from Negro admixture is never prognathous; the nose is straight (or aquiline when there is an infusion of Armenoid blood), the lips are often thick, but never everted as in the Negro, the hair is often frizzly, but sometimes wavy or almost straight, beard generally thin; the colour of the skin varies, it may be yellowish,

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coppery, red-brown, through every grade of *café-au-lait* to black, according to the amount of miscegenation that has taken place. Both divisions of the Hamites, according to Sergi, agree substantially in their bony structure, and thus form a single anthropological group, with skulls showing a considerable range of variation but constant in that each of the varieties he recognizes (Sergi has a special terminology for skulls) recurs in each great division, as in the main do the facial characteristics.

It is possible that some of these statements may require modification in the case of the Northern branch as it exists at the present day, since distinct foreign strains can be traced.

The Hamitic cradle-land is generally agreed to be Asiatic, perhaps Southern Arabia or possibly an area farther east, though Sergi suggests the Horn of Africa. Be this as it may, there is no doubt that the Hamites and Semites must be regarded as modifications of an original stock, and that their differentiation did not take place so very long ago, evidence for this statement being furnished by the persistence of common cultural traits and linguistic affinities. Physically their relationship is obvious, as also their kinship with the European representatives of the Mediterranean race, though some anthropologists admit this relationship only for the Northern branch of the Hamites, proposing to distinguish these from the Eastern branch by the term Libyan.

We may begin our survey of the Hamites with the

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Eastern group, and this is the more convenient since apart from a few skeletal remains referred to the Old Stone Age—with which in this volume we are not concerned—the oldest “Africans” of whom we have any organized knowledge belong to this group. These are the Egyptians of the predynastic period (anterior to about 3200 B.C.), best known as the proto-Egyptians. French authorities commonly refer to the proto-Egyptians as neolithic, but this is hardly correct: a certain amount of copper is found even in early proto-Egyptian burials, and as far as Egypt is concerned the term neolithic should be reserved for the Stone Age people of the Fayum, whose settlements—but not their graves—have so recently been discovered by Miss Caton-Thompson. Both the high antiquity of the graves of the proto-Egyptians and the excellent condition of their contents make it convenient to begin our description of Hamitic Africa with some account of the predynastic Egyptians, afterwards passing to the present-day representatives of this ancient stock. Their physical characters have been most carefully studied by Elliot Smith, from whose writings the following account is taken:

“The earliest known inhabitants of Upper Egypt were a people slightly below the average size of mankind. Their muscular development was so feeble that it frequently becomes a very difficult problem to determine to which sex an isolated skull or long bone belonged. Their physical characteristics exhibit a remarkable degree of homogeneity. Their hair was dark brown or black, and either straight or wavy, without the slightest suspicion of any Negro characteristics. In the men there was the

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scantiest development of facial hair except on the chin, where a tuft was found recalling that seen in the conventional portraits of the later dynastic Egyptians. . . . These people had long, narrow heads with an exceptionally narrow forehead and prominent occiput, so that the skull, when viewed from above, presents a characteristic form . . . aptly termed 'coffin-shaped.' The face was a moderately long and narrow ellipse; the nose was broader and especially flatter than that of the European, without, however, being definitely negroid; the horizontally-placed, elliptical orbits were often decidedly flattened and the chin was almost always pointed."

The Egyptian of predynastic times belonged then to the short, dark-haired, dark-eyed group of peoples, such as are found on both shores of the Mediterranean. The same stock extended beyond Upper Egypt into Nubia—where although negriticized it still forms the basis of the population—and eastwards to the Red Sea, for, much as the proto-Egyptian resembles the Mediterranean European and the Berber, he presents a likeness so close as to amount in some instances to identity with the tribes inhabiting the desert or steppe between the Nile Valley and the Red Sea.

More precisely, the predynastic Egyptian was short, scarcely over 64 inches in the flesh, and dolichocephalic, with an index as regards the Naqada crania of some 73—corresponding to about 75 in the living—and a nasal index (skeletal) of about 50 (mesorrhine), all characters which, as we shall immediately see, are characteristic of a group of people known as Beja, who inhabit the Eastern Desert of Egypt, the Red Sea Province of the Anglo-



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Egyptian Sudan, and extend through the Italian colony of Eritrea to reach Abyssinia. We shall return to this matter later, meanwhile describing something of the burial customs of the predynastic Egyptians.

The body usually lay upon the left side, with the arms and legs flexed, in a shallow pit of oval or rectangular form at from 2 to 4 feet below the surface. The direction of the long axis of the graves is inconstant, but they are generally more or less parallel to the local course of the river, the head of the deceased being usually directed to the south. The grave was often lined with matting and the body was sometimes wrapped in goat-skins or linen, and lay surrounded by those valuable possessions which the soul might be thought to require in the other world. These objects included vessels of pottery and even of the hardest stone—the latter worked with a skill which has seldom been attained in any other place or time in the world's history—slate palettes, beads, figurines, knives and other implements, and occasionally throwing-sticks and objects made of or covered with gold, while copper occurs at first sporadically and then more commonly throughout the whole predynastic period.

The Beja are divisible into four groups, which from north to south are: (1) The Ababda of the eastern desert of Egypt. (2) The Bisharin, also of the Egyptian desert, but extending some 80 miles south of the Egyptian-Sudan boundary and occupying a strip of territory on the Atbara River. (3)

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The Hadendoa group, consisting of a number of cognate tribes, of which the Hadendoa is the strongest and best known ; this group includes the Amarar, the Nurab, the Ashraf, and the Artega, and extends as far south as Tokar and the Khor Baraka. (4) The Beni Amer, occupying the country to the south of the Khor Baraka, extending into Eritrea, and even into Abyssinia, where the type is found though called by other names.

The Ababda, who once spoke To Bedawi, the language (Hamitic) of the Bisharin and the Hadendoa, have lost their old tongue and now speak Arabic, while the Beni Amer speak a Semitic language called Tigré. Yet in spite of differences in language the habits of the Beni Amer and Hadendoa are very similar, although the latter—the “ Fuzzy Wuzzy ” of the British soldier—are on the whole a fiercer, wilder people ; the Beni Amer—who took no part in the fighting round El Teb during the Mahdia—have presumably been softened in manner and habit by the same Semitic cultural influence that has given them a Semitic language. The Ababda to the north have to a considerable extent become egyptianized, but the hills between the Nile and the Red Sea still harbour a fair number of this people who adhere to their old customs and lead very much their old style of life. The following table shows some of the chief physical characters of these closely allied tribes, it being obvious that the Beni Amer and Ababda stand close to the proto-Egyptians, while the Hadendoa and Bisharin, if belonging to the series—as from other considera-

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tions we may feel assured they do—have suffered such infusion of foreign blood as to produce a difference in cephalic index and stature, besides such other modifications as we find, e.g., in the character of the nose in the Hadendoa.

|                             | C.I. | Stature<br>(to about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch) |
|-----------------------------|------|--|
| Ababda . . .                | 73·7 | 64 inches                                |
| Bisharin (Riverain) .       | 78·4 | 66 „                                     |
| Bisharin (Hill). .          | 74·7 | 66 $\frac{1}{2}$ „                       |
| Hadendoa . . .              | 76·3 | 65 $\frac{3}{4}$ „                       |
| Beni Amer . . .             | 74·7 | 64 $\frac{1}{2}$ „                       |
| Proto-Egyptians<br>(Naqada) | 74·9 | 64 „                                     |

It will be realized that in the measurements given in the table the cranial index of the proto-Egyptians has been increased by two units to make it comparable with those of the Beni Amer taken on the living subject. We may then regard the Beni Amer, the least modified of the Beja tribes, as the modern representatives of the old pre-dynastic Egyptian stock; a fact which is extraordinarily interesting from the point of view of the stability of type for a period extending for at least some 6,000 years. The higher cephalic index of the Hadendoa head, due to an increase in breadth, is not the only difference between Hadendoa and Beni Amer; the face often shows differences, the Hadendoa frequently having a so-called Jewish—really Armenoid—nose, a feature which does not seem to occur among the Beni Amer, and which with their greater bulk may no doubt be attributed

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to an infusion of Armenoid blood from across the Red Sea.

As already mentioned (p. 101), the proto-Egyptians buried their dead surrounded by all manner of necessities and luxuries, and it is this habit that has enabled us to reconstruct so much of the civilization of these early inhabitants of the Nile Valley. They were agriculturists, growing crops of grain, but they also kept goats, and towards the end of the period, as it would appear, donkeys. They were keen hunters and fishermen, and a number of copper harpoon heads found, of the same pattern as the iron weapons at present in use on the Upper Nile, show that they were accustomed to hunting the hippopotamus. Added to this they were admirable potters, and in the latter part of the predynastic period attained the greatest skill in working hard stone into beautifully shaped and proportioned vases. If we contrast this civilization with that of their modern representatives the Beja we find no close resemblances. The Beja by the nature of the country they inhabit are nomad or semi-nomad pastoralists; the camel, which they have probably only possessed for some 2,000 years, has given them a greater command over desert life than their early forebears can ever have had, and they thus occupy parts of the desert which in early days, if as we believe the climate was much the same as at present, must have been uninhabitable. It would then be surprising if they had developed the arts and crafts of the proto-Egyptians of the Nile Valley. There is, however, one interesting point of contact :

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the Bisharin still make stone pots, though for this purpose they use the softest stone obtainable, soap-stone so soft that it can be worked with a knife.

The social organization of the Beja is particularly interesting, because although they now include perhaps the most fanatical Muhammadans in East Africa, the majority, if not all, were heathen as recently as the lifetime of the historian Makrizi (1366-1442), who wrote of them in the following terms :

“ They are nomads living in skin tents which they carry wherever they find grazing. Their genealogies are counted in the female line. Each tribe has a chief but they recognize no paramount. They have no religion. Property passes to the sons of sister and daughter to the prejudice of the sons of the deceased. To justify this custom they say that there can be no doubt as to the parentage of the son and daughter of a sister and these must belong to the family, whether their mother had gotten them by her husband or by another man. They formerly had a paramount chief to whom all the other chiefs were subordinate.”

Makrizi adds that the Beja had many dromedaries and camels, besides sheep and cattle innumerable which provided them with meat and milk ; in another passage he speaks of them as a people utterly irreligious and unintelligent, both men and women going naked and having no other covering than a loin-cloth, while the majority of them lacked even this.

Here is a perfectly definite account of a pagan, nomad, pastoral people, with matrilineal descent, living almost entirely upon the milk and flesh of

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their flocks. With the exception only of matrilineal descent—which has been given up owing to the introduction of Islam—and the wearing of Arab clothing, the picture drawn by Makrizi is that seen by any traveller in the remoter parts of the eastern desert at the present day. Moreover, a slight acquaintance with the people is enough to show that they retain indisputable traces of a former matriarchy. Their social organization even now is an extraordinarily interesting example of the persistence of older usages that are not contrary to the written word of the Koran. Thus, although descent is patrilineal as commanded by the Koran, among the Hadendoa a man goes to his bride's village to be married and stays there from one to three years, and almost the whole of the marriage-tent, and especially the marriage-bed, is provided by the bride's relatives ; moreover the bridegroom has to do service to his father-in-law, helping him in all matters as a son, while in some communities there is a strict rule that the first child should be born among its mother's people.

As already stated, the Beja are essentially pastoralists, and on account of their love of their cattle show a special regard for milk, which is one of their most interesting characteristics and which on analysis can be shown to go back to an old Hamito-Semitic civilization. Even at the present day none of the Beja tribes milk into a clay vessel or will put milk into these, in spite of the fact that many of them make good pots, nor would it be permissible to milk into the tin vessels introduced by European

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trade. Gourds and basketry vessels—the latter so well made as to hold milk without any tendency to leak—are considered the appropriate receptacles. Nor may a man drink the milk which he has himself drawn until some one else has taken a few sips ; indeed, it would be a sore term of reproach to say of a man : “ He milked, and immediately drank.” There are also curious customs and prohibitions on the cooking of milk. Especially do the Beja despise, e.g., some of the Arab tribes for allowing their women to milk their animals. All these facts indicate that milk is not “ common,” using the word in the Biblical sense. It might indeed almost be called sacred or sacrosanct, and as noted in Chapter VII this holds equally for such tribes as the Masai and Nandi of East Africa, who have much Hamitic blood in their veins.

To return to the Nile Valley proper. In Egypt there is evidence of a gradual modification in the population from the beginning of dynastic times, so that by the Pyramid period the population of Egypt was of a heavier build, with a broader skull and face and a heavier jaw, the roundness of skull being determined by an increase of breadth rather than by general increase in the diameter of the skull. These are the people portrayed in such magnificent works of art of the Pyramid period as the “ Scribes ” of Giza and the Louvre, and the Sheikh el Beled, and they no doubt represent the type of a considerable part of the population of the Ancient Kingdom. Culturally they were the creators of the finest statuary, wall paintings, and sculptures in low relief,

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to which Egypt attained, and it was their work that the consciously archaistic Egyptians of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty endeavoured to imitate as representing the highest development of their national art. But what has been written applies only to the natives of Upper Egypt. We have no knowledge of what was happening in the Delta through dynastic and predynastic times ; the remains, if any persist, are hidden under great masses of alluvial deposits.

The type described persisted and probably increased in number through dynastic times, and it is in fact that of the fellahin of the present day. The modern Egyptian, with a stature of about 66 inches, shows no great variation as between Upper and Lower Egypt. He is persistently long-headed, with a cephalic index varying round about 75, though the index is about a unit higher in Lower than in Upper Egypt. Moreover, in passing southwards there is a slight tendency towards negritization : it has been pointed out that the eye and skin colour darken, that the proportion of unusually broad noses increases, and that spiral and crisp hair becomes more frequent.

Foreigners often profess to be able to distinguish at sight between Muslims and Copts, but since physical analysis indicates no substantial difference the distinction if it exists must be essentially cultural, due to habits and traits dependent on mode of life. The Copts, Christians, and predominantly town-dwellers, are particularly clerks and shop-keepers, while the great majority of fellahin are peasants. Perhaps then the effect of respectively



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subservient and dominant habits has brought about a perceptible difference ; it is true that slight differences in the character of the face have been described, the Copts having lighter eyes and skin colour and a slightly thinner nose, but in spite of this it may be doubted whether the diagnosis at sight between Copt and Muslim is not wholly a matter of such factors as gait and dress.

It is scarcely necessary to point out the interest, from the general biological aspect, of the persistence through thousands of years of these two types—the thin, slight, desert man, a living proto-Egyptian, and the stouter cultivator of the Nile Valley, of the same aspect as his forebears of the Ancient Kingdom and the Middle Empire—facts which make it worth while to draw attention to the existence among the present population of folk beliefs and customs which are no less ancient. There is in existence a papyrus—dating from the time of Rameses II, or possibly his successor—which not only marks lucky and unlucky days but gives instructions as to how their unfortunate character may be averted. The five epagomenal days of the old Egyptian calendar were regarded as unlucky, the instructions being : “ Do not do any work on these things, wheat, spelt, flax, clothing. Do not devise anything at all ” ; and in modern Egypt we find it said that a child begotten during the epagomenal days will be misshapen, this also applying to animals, so that cattle and mares are not covered during this period ; there is a general, though perhaps less intense, belief that neither sowing nor planting should be undertaken.

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An even more striking example is presented by a day near the end of the month of Choiak. The papyrus marks the 26th of this month as most unlucky, the warning being, "Do not eat fish; those living in the midst of Tattu turn themselves into the fish An." The last sentence contains a mythological reference that we cannot appreciate, but in the modern calendar the note for Muharram 11th, which corresponds to the old Choiak, the 26th, is this: "The eating of pigeons is liked, that of fish disliked." It is not suggested that these instances are actually older than some of the folk beliefs of our own and other European countries; their great interest seems to be that the date at which they were written down, not necessarily for the first time, is known, and conclusively demonstrates how a lucky or unlucky day may persist through a change of calendar, being transferred to the new calendar and accepted by the adherents of a religion, commonly regarded as fanatical, whose leaders would undoubtedly brand the belief as highly superstitious and unorthodox.

With regard to the oases extending west of the Nile Valley, the inhabitants of Kharga are Egyptian, and in no way distinct from those of the valley itself, but this is unlikely to hold for the remote oases of Siwa, Dakhla, etc., where in spite of many loan words Berber dialects are spoken.

South of Egypt proper lies Nubia, with a political boundary at Wady Halfa, regarded north of this as Egyptian, while to the south it is administered from Khartum. This arrangement is entirely artificial,

for ethnically (as geographically) the transition takes place at the First Cataract. Nevertheless, lower Nubia was in earlier days so dominated by Egypt that in the year 1879 B.C. the Pharaoh decreed that the Second Cataract should be the northern limit of Negroland, which no Negro should pass except on a definite mission or when coming to trade for a limited period. The stele at Semma near the cataract reads :

“ Southern boundary, made in the year 8, under the majesty of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Khékure (Sesostris III) who is given life for ever and ever ; in order to prevent that any Negro should cross it, by water or by land, with a ship (or) any herds of the Negroes ; except a Negro who shall come to do trading in Iken or with a commission. Every good thing shall be done with them, but without allowing a ship of the Negroes to pass by Heh, going downstream, for ever.”

Immediately above the First Cataract the traveller is struck by a new language, generally admitted to belong to the great (Negro) Sudanic family, though one authority has regarded it as basically hamitic but heavily negritized. Be this as it may, the Nubians themselves—commonly known as Barabra, though calling themselves Nubi—must be regarded as predominantly hamitic. Of medium height, and mainly long-headed, the less negritized type are of a slight, rather graceful build, which immediately distinguishes them from the fellahin. They are darker skinned, the finer types are longer faced, and though the hair is frequently curly it is seldom as crisp as that of a Negro, the occurrence of individuals reproducing the head-shape of the proto-

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Egyptian type being not very uncommon. How this comes about will be best understood by considering their history. The excavations above Aswan conducted by the Archæological Survey of Nubia show that some 3,000 years B.C. Nubia was inhabited by a people similar to the predynastic Egyptians, with a civilization essentially resembling that of the latter, if rather less advanced. As might be expected they traded freely with the Egyptians, as is clear by the discovery in their graves of typical late predynastic Egyptian objects of the finest type, including, e.g., a magnificent gold-handled stone mace. Naturally the connection did not end at this remote period ; the history of Nubia, known with fair accuracy from Egyptian sources, shows Egypt in a condition of continual trade and intermittent warfare with the peoples south of the First Cataract, from the time of the Pyramid-builders until, under the New Empire, Nubia was thoroughly egyptianized. During all this time, and indeed much later, we can trace the gradual ebb and flow of influence from the north, according to the condition of Egypt at the time. After the Pyramid period Nubia must have sunk back during the dark period from the Sixth to the Eleventh Dynasty ; she emerges into the light again in the Twelfth Dynasty, and a repetition of this to-and-fro movement no doubt took place during the periodic fluctuations of Egyptian influence south of the cataract. There is also evidence of considerable pressure by the Beja peoples of the Eastern Desert. Hence there arose in Nubia a hybrid population, blending the characters of

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Egyptian, Negro, and Beja, and it is this type—which can clearly be defined in the graves of the Middle Empire (i.e. the Twelfth to the Seventeenth Dynasty)—that has in the main persisted in Nubia to the present day, allowance being made for a new incoming round-headed influence which certainly existed in this part of the country about the beginning of the Christian era and which may have been reinforced indirectly by the Arab invasions (discussed in Chapter X).

The Barabra of the present day are usually recognized as belonging to four main divisions, which may well be called tribes, and, although they have adopted the Arabs' social organization, the names of a number of their tribal sections point back to the Beja element in their origin. The following are the tribal units generally recognized :

The Kenuz, of the country in the neighbourhood of the Wady Kenuz and between Aswan and Korosko, who consider themselves descendants of the Arabic Beni Kenz ; the Feyadicha, extending southwards to Wady Halfa ; the Mahas, from Wady Halfa to Dongola ; the Danagla, in the neighbourhood of Dongola.

The Barabra are an enterprising people, travellers and traders, not unscholarly, and quick at picking up languages, so that they are found everywhere as settlers between the Delta and Khartum, the qualities which fit them for adventures in foreign parts being especially marked in the Danagla, who have appreciably influenced the culture of Northern Kordofan and formed a considerable part of the

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personnel of the Arab slave-raiders of the middle portion of last century. The pooriness of their country is no doubt largely responsible for their dispersion, for, though they are an agricultural people wherever this is possible, over a great part of their territory the desert closes in to within a few yards of the river.

The Berberine scar their cheeks with vertical or oblique cuts on each side of the face, and they mutilate their girls in the same way as do the Arab tribes of the south. Although the women now wear the Arab robe it is scarcely more than fifty years since their customary garment was a short petticoat reaching to the knees. Their hand-made pottery is particularly good; they make excellent baskets and mats, and Burchhardt mentions having frequently seen small looms in their houses.

The country between the frontiers of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and Kenya Colony and the sea, though composed of five political units (from north to south—Eritrea, Abyssinia, French, British and Italian Somaliland) possesses such fundamental ethnic unity that its peoples cannot well be described separately. Everywhere in this area the population is Hamitic, or has at least an Hamitic basis, the only exception being the Shangalla, the negro or heavily negriticized tribes occupying the western and southern slopes of the Abyssinian tableland. Some of these have been mentioned (p. 88), here it is only necessary to state that this term is not tribal but merely the Amharic for "Negro," and so is applied

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by the Abyssinians to all tribes with noticeably negroid characters.

Ethnically much of Eritrea differs little from the neighbouring portion of the Red Sea Province of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, nor at the present time is there evidence that Eritrea was ever inhabited by Negroes. In the north-west are the Beni Amer, in the Keren Province are the Bogos (now Roman Catholic), who speak a Cushitic language (termed Bilen) as do the Shoho round Annesley Bay south of Massawa.

In Abyssinia proper the aboriginal population is generally assumed to have been Negro. If this be true it is possible that their remains are to be seen in some of the lowly negroid hunting peoples scattered over much of Abyssinia, known, e.g. to the Galla and Abyssinians, as Wata, and to the Kafficho as Manjo. Be this as it may, there seems no reason to doubt that the Hamites were entering the country at irregular intervals over a prolonged period and were in East Africa some thousands of years B.C., with the result that the present inhabitants of Abyssinia are broadly a mixture of Hamite and Negro, carrying perhaps 80 per cent. of Hamitic blood, with a leavening of Semites whose influence—since physically they resemble the Hamites—can be traced only by cultural and historical criteria. The Semitic languages, Ge'ez and Amharic, may be assumed to mark out the area most affected by their immigrations, it being always remembered that there is a dual tendency over the whole of this area to exaggerate the Semitic element—by the

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Abyssinians on the one hand on account of their old Jewish connection and the traditional descent of their royal family from the Queen of Sheba, and by the Somali and cognate peoples owing to their desire to accentuate the historical implications of the religion they have adopted. The term Cushite is often applied to that section of the Hamites found in Abyssinia (linguistically Cushite and Cushitic definitely have this sense), so that the Abyssinians proper might be described as semiticized Cushites, in opposition to the purer Cushites of the north (Bogos, etc.), the centre (Agau), and the south (Kafficho, Wallamu, etc.).

As might be inferred from what has already been said, the inhabitants of Northern Abyssinia exhibit a relationship to the Beja, but are much more mixed ; thus, while the late Emperor, Haile Selassie, might almost pass for a south European, his predecessor was in feature distinctly negroid. Apart from negroid characters their skulls are of the proto-Egyptian type, though a certain number are higher and rounder, indeed a group of ninety-four skulls contained 5 per cent. of brachycephals while none occurred in two series of over fifty each of Beni Amer and Hadendoa. Some such result as this might be expected in view of the historical connection of Abyssinia with Arabia, and it is supported by Schweinfurth's account of the northern Abyssinians. He describes them as " a very mixed race," and goes on to say that although he

" paid attention to thousands . . . [he] always failed to find a single common feature, a characteristic peculiarity



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in their appearance, by which, in the majority of cases, they might be distinguished from the other . . . races of this district, for instance, the Hamitic . . . Habab, and Beni Amer. The one thing . . . binding them together is their speech, a branch of the old Ge'ez. . . ."

Turning then to linguistics, we find that the languages spoken in Abyssinia are not only of great interest in themselves but are important as being, so far as we know, the oldest Semitic languages spoken in Africa. The Abyssinians have been Christians since the fourth century, and the Bible was translated into Ethiopic, or Ge'ez—a language akin to both Hebrew and Arabic but closer to an ancient tongue of Southern Arabia known as Sabaeen—by the seventh century. In the thirteenth century a particular dialect known as Amharic became the official language of the court and government, the province of Amhara having obtained a predominance which it maintained until the nineteenth century. This language, which is still written in Ethiopic, has diverged greatly from the ancient Semitic type, so that some have called it Hamitic rather than Semitic. The more modern representative of Ethiopic, and one undoubtedly Semitic, is the Tigré spoken in the northern province of Abyssinia, in the Italian colony of Eritrea, and in the extreme south of the Red Sea Province of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.

Of the older Cushitic languages a certain number are important because spoken by influential tribes ; such are the Somali and Galla in the south, the Danakil (sometimes called 'Afar) in the east, the

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Agau in the centre, and the Bogos (also known as Bilin) of Agau origin, in the north.

Abyssinia is not only a country of ethnic confusion, but also of religious confusion, for here are found pagans (many Galla), Muhammadans (many Galla and Somali in the south, Beni Amer, Saho, etc., in the north), Christians, and even Jews, the last the Falasha, the so-called "black" Jews of Abyssinia. As regards all these confessions : Abyssinian Islam, though Sunnite, is little orthodox, there exist no theological schools connected with mosques, nor are there any of those religious brotherhoods which have done so much for Islam in North Africa ; hence indifference to and imperfect knowledge of the observances of Islam, and even the presence at Christian ceremonies of such people as the Beni Amer. Christianity probably reached Abyssinia from Syria ; the King of "Semitic" Aksum was converted about A.D. 450, and somewhat later came a dark period in Abyssinian history during which time the great saints of the Abyssinian Church performed so many miracles. It must have been during this period that Abyssinia sought contact with the Egyptian Church, with the result that Abyssinian Christianity is Coptic (monophysite), receives its patriarch (*abuna*) from Alexandria, and still preserves in its church services the use of the old Egyptian sistrum, long disused in its country of origin.

A good deal of interest has been taken in the "black" Jews, the Falasha (from the Ethiopic *falas* "stranger"), though little is known about them.

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Tradition states that the Queen of Sheba, who was a princess of Aksum, was instructed in the Jewish religion when she visited Solomon, and on her return introduced it into her own country. This is, of course, legendary, but there does seem to have been some unrecorded connection between Judaism and Abyssinia—perhaps before the introduction of Christianity—for there are a number of Old Testament practices in Abyssinian Christianity. Moreover, the Aramaic loan words denoting religious ideas in the older Abyssinian texts are of Jewish-Aramaean rather than Christian-Aramaean origin, e.g. those connected with the observance of the Sabbath, which has even been personified as a female saint, the distinction between clean and unclean animals, and ideas of ritual uncleanness. Therefore, since there is no record of the conversion of the Falasha, it has been suggested that their Jewish faith is a survival of the early connection alluded to above.

The Falasha live for the most part in villages of their own, and until 1800, when they became subject to the Abyssinian kingdom of 'Tigré, had their own "kings," claiming descent from David. An industrious people, skilled in agriculture and in the manufacture of pottery, ironware, and cloth, and good masons, they hold themselves aloof from the other peoples of the land and generally have a higher standard of morals than their neighbours. They do not practise polygamy, and never marry out of their own people. Entering a Christian house is strictly forbidden; if this is done, ritual purification is necessary. They are divided into three sects,

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each with its high priest, fast twice a week, and for forty days before Easter. Their ritual contains various pagan elements: as already stated the Sabbath has been deified, and as the Goddess Sanbat receives adoration and sacrifices; a woman guilty of unchastity has to be purified by leaping through flames; no newly built house is considered habitable until the blood of a sheep or fowl has been spilt on it. Celibacy is not practised by the priests, though they may not marry a second time; there is a monastic system, introduced it is said in the fourth century A.D. The numbers of the Falasha are variously estimated at from one hundred to one hundred and fifty thousand.

The Galla (calling themselves Ilm Orma, and often known as Oromo), perhaps the most interesting people in Abyssinia, appear in history in the fifteenth century, occupying the southern shore of the Gulf of Aden and thrusting vigorously westward, a movement facilitated by the invasions of Abyssinia by Muhammad Granye, the Galla tending to follow in his track and to occupy the territories he had laid waste. Apart from colour—which varies greatly, the Borana being lighter than “brown” and the Wallega and Itu much darker—the Galla are described as remarkably uniform in physical type. They are mesaticephals of rather massive build, with a high and broad forehead and regular features. The majority are still pagan, though definitely Muhammadan and Christian groups also exist. They are less excitable and warlike than their

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Somali and Danakil neighbours, and generally regarded as more intelligent, so that it is not surprising that their influence has increased of recent years. Although living nominally under Abyssinian institutions, and providing the bulk of the cavalry of the Abyssinian army, the Galla formerly had a highly complex system of social organization which to some extent still persists. Under this the people were divided into groups, called *gada*, arranged in pairs, each man entering the group of his grandfather. Each pair of groups passed through five successive periods of eight years each. The men of the fourth period were responsible for and ruled the country, the Abba Boku (father of the sceptre) being elected from this group.

With the exception of the Borana nomads the Galla are now mainly an agricultural people, but cattle are still the most valued form of wealth, and the attainment of 1,000 head of stock is marked by a special ceremony. The agricultural Galla use a primitive plough drawn by camels or oxen.

While it is at present impossible to say what relation Galla religion bears to that of their forebears of pre-Christian and pre-Muhammadan times, the fact that they constitute the only surviving group of any size of pagan Hamites makes their religious ideas of the highest interest. They recognize a supreme deity, Wak or Waka (heaven, sky) and a subordinate god and goddess, Atete and Oglie, while at every new moon the head of the household (who acts as priest at all religious functions) sacrifices to the unseen moon adjuring her to ask the coming

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new moon to continue to protect his cattle, etc. Certain animals are said to be sacred, including the snake, the crocodile and the owl (there is, however, no evidence that these are totems), and, at least among the southern Galla, there is a well-defined tree cult; great reverence is paid to the baobab, milk being poured over its roots once a month, while once a year "they kill for it a black sheep"; they also honour a number of other trees, e.g. the wild fig, and one called *karayu*, which is also the name of a clan who will not cut down this tree. Divination is performed by inspection of the stomach of a slaughtered cow, and interpretation of the flight of birds. The chief religious act is the *wadaja*, or offering of common prayer; the ceremony is accompanied by a sacrificial meal, a portion of which is offered to Wak. Until prohibited by the Abyssinians an important feature of the Galla religion was the pilgrimage to Wallega to the Abba Muda (father of Unction), the supreme religious authority of the race, said to live in a mysterious cave with a serpent. The pilgrims were catechized on the law of Wak and the customs of the Galla and exhorted against Islam, the Abba Muda anointing their heads with butter. Only men might take part, and every family was expected to send a representative at least once in three generations.

The Galla wear a petticoat or tunic and the *tobe* (cotton sheet), with sometimes a sheep- or leopard-skin over their shoulders; some women combine a cotton wrap with a skin undergarment. In war they carry two light javelins, a heavy spear, and a

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small round shield. Their huts are circular, with a vertical wall of clay or rough stone and a conical stone roof. Cotton-weaving was formerly a notable industry, and good metal and leather work was produced; among many Galla the smiths form a distinct caste.

Monogamy is general, except among the Borana, and the bride price is paid in cattle. A widow is inherited by her husband's brother, together with any children she has borne. The family is patriarchal, the father having the power of life and death over his children, whom he may even sell into slavery. The eldest son is the chief heir; women have no right of inheritance. Unchastity in women before marriage is extremely rare, and legally disqualifies them for wedlock.

The early history of the Somali is obscure; that they are essentially Hamitic is certain, and it is more than probable that they are comparatively recent migrants from across the sea, taking possession of territory inhabited before them, at least in part, by the Galla.

Physically the Somali are not unlike the Galla, but with a lower cephalic index (about 75) and a taller stature, reaching an average height of 68 inches. Their colour varies from light to dark brown, or even darker, "black" skins being common enough in the East African ports in individuals calling themselves Somali. As is usual among nomadic desert men compelled to lead an abstemious life, they are very enduring under hardship, and can subsist for a considerable time upon a

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minimum of food and water. Observers lay stress on their cheerful, light-hearted character, as well as upon their inordinate conceit and their insatiable avarice; it is perhaps because of these qualities that, when well led, the Somali has proved a reliable soldier, but though generally easy-going he can, on occasion, develop a rather surprising religious fanaticism, as shown by the episode of the "Mad" Mullah as well as in recurring periods of unrest under other less gifted leaders. Each tribe has a chief, chieftainship being confined to a single family, but, as usual among nomads, the power of the chief is generally small, and the office entails at least as many troublesome duties as privileges.

According to the Somali there are two distinct stocks in their country, the Asha or Somali proper, and the Irir or Hawiya (which includes such important tribes as the Aysa and Gadabursi), the alleged descendants of their Galla predecessors. Elaborate genealogies are produced to support these statements, but there is no obvious difference in physical type, if there originally was any it has long ago been lost.

The Danakil, or Afar, who speak a language akin to the Somali, inhabit a roughly triangular area north of the Somali and Galla, bounded on the east by the sea and on the west by the eastern scarp of the Abyssinian plateau. They are described as particularly thin men, with an average height of about 64 inches, with features, "of Semitic type, regular and handsome." Their skin is said to be as dark as that of many Negroes, their hair coarse



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and curly but not woolly. There is a dominant class, or nobility, distinguished as *Asainiara* or "red men," in contradistinction to the *Adomaira* or "white men," the two classes standing in the relationship of conquerors and conquered, though there is no difference in colour at the present day---indeed, it seems doubtful if there ever was. Rather is the difference one dependent on the invasion of the land by a people not essentially different from the earlier occupants expanding towards the coast from the Abyssinian plateau. The Danakil profess Islam, but their practice is lax, and they lack regular priests or teachers.

Geographical position rather than ethnic knowledge suggests the mention in this chapter of the outcast, or more picturesquely "pariah," tribes of Eastern Africa and Abyssinia, though the term seems overstrong for such peoples as the Midgan (hunters and surgeons), Tomal (smiths) and Jiber (leather-workers) of the Somali, all grouped together under the heading *Sāb*. It is generally assumed that the area under discussion was formerly peopled by a dwarf or pygmy race, presumably the ancestors of Bushmen or Negrillos, and that the outcasts are their descendants. While this may be true of some of these peoples, e.g. the Sandawi of Tanganyika Territory have Bushmen clicks and gutturals and the Wasania are said to have clicks, it is noteworthy that such peoples as the Dorobo (Oggiek) of Kenya Colony---symbiotes, if the term be permitted, of such strong pastorals as the Masai and Nandi---do

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not present any suggestion of a pygmy ancestry, they are in fact well-grown men and women, some obviously carrying so much Hamitic blood that they might be grouped with the half-Hamites. This does not necessarily negative the idea of their being the remains of an earlier population, but it does seem to imply that any contact with pygmy tribes was but slight and perhaps not even at first hand, the "primitive" element being not essentially pygmy but rather negro, and their use of bow and poisoned arrow—the typical weapon of the pygmy peoples—being due to mediate rather than actual contact. Investigation of the "submerged classes," the *dupi*, of the Bari of the extreme southern Sudan (p. 167) bears out this view. Many of these *dupi* are sturdy, broad-faced, broad-nosed blacks, as opposed to at least some of the longer-faced "commoners," the latter often men with higher bridges to their noses as well as narrower nostrils.

All the Dorobo appear to speak Nandi, but unlike the latter possess no domesticated animals except the dog; they carry spears as well as arrows, and make great use of game pits, while some communities have weighted drop spears for rhinoceros and elephant.

The Wata, to give them their Galla name, constitute scattered, little-known groups in Southern Abyssinia. . .

## CHAPTER VI

### HAMITES (NORTHERN HAMITES)

BEFORE describing the peoples included in this vast group (and how vast it is will best be realized by looking at the map on p. 16, and neglecting all indications of Arabic influence west of the Nile) it must be emphasized that the northern states constituting its political units—Tripoli, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco—are from the anthropological standpoint entirely artificial, their boundaries in no instance coinciding with any geographical or ethnic division. It is also essential to realize that the number of Arabs entering North Africa was never very great, and that the social results of inter-marriage and the prestige of the dominant religion accounts for the arabization—so far as it has taken place—of Tunisia and Algeria far more than a substitution of Arab for Berber blood. In Tripoli the matter stands rather differently : apart from the narrow littoral belt, which intercepts the greater part of the rainfall, the climatological conditions are such that the country (whatever may have been the case in Roman times) consists almost entirely of desert or poor steppe, apt enough for nomads or semi-nomads but offering little attraction to sedentary cultivators. Thus it is that in Eastern Tripoli

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we have such true Arabs as the Aulad Ali described in Chapter X. Neglecting these and their congeners we may begin our description of the Berbers by pointing out that excavations at Mersa Matruh, in the neighbourhood of the western Egyptian frontier, suggest that at a period perhaps as remote as the third millennium B.C. the population of the coastal plain had a culture similar to the proto-Egyptians, their well-made stone pots being highly significant in this respect, though they differ in shape and design from any found in the Nile Valley. Of a later date are the skeletons found at Roknia in Algeria, buried in true dolmens, i.e. in tombs consisting of entire single slabs and not of built-up courses of stone. Their date is uncertain; their latest limit certainly falls within the Iron Age, itself of indefinite date in North Africa, yet the skulls include examples of proto-Egyptian type, as well as heavier rounder skulls which can probably be related to the round-heads described on p. 130. Here, then, in the prehistoric period are present at least two of the types which, as we shall immediately see, can be recognized in the population of North Africa at the present day, but before referring to these in detail it will be well to say something about the blond Berbers concerning whom so much has been written.

It is first necessary to stress the white quality of the skin of the Berber tribes generally, and to realize that the skin, even where it is most exposed, "burns to the tint peculiar to white men and resembles that of the fairer rather than of the darker

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racés even among these." The Shawia of the Aures Mountains of Algeria, among whom <sup>at</sup> and <sup>na</sup> at least as frequent as elsewhere, are <sup>ing</sup> generally speaking, remarkably European in their <sup>ian</sup> appearance," so that many might pass for Irishmen or Scotchmen.

"The boys in particular when about the age of 15 or 16 would if put into similar dress be almost indistinguishable from English lads of the same age . . . [but] it would certainly occur to an observer that the preponderance of dark hair was in excess of what would be found in most English districts. Fair-haired men as blond even as North Germans are to be seen . . . but even taking a village by itself there was no instance in which their numbers seemed to equal those of the dark-haired men, ordinarily they were in a very small minority . . . on the other hand, it has hardly perhaps been sufficiently noticed that all without exception, whether their hair or eyes be dark or light, are invariably fair-skinned, much fairer than a typical Tuscan or Spaniard."

If the inhabitants of the Aures Mountains constitute a fair sample, then in a general way the Berbers of Algeria may be described as spare in build, averaging about 67 inches in stature, with black hair and brown or hazel eyes. The women, who wither early, are in other respects the smaller counterparts of the men, their invariably dark hair being due to frequent dyeing with gall nut.

After this general statement we may consider the various types that have been identified in Tripoli, Tunisia, and Algeria. Morocco is anthropologically too little known to provide the necessary data, and

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we may early eliminate Tripoli from our discussion by Chapter X. But that it is only for the extreme west of Italy's territory that measurements exist, that these show that in the neighbourhood of Tripoli city the population is predominantly long-headed with a medium stature of  $65\frac{1}{2}$  inches, but that there is an island of high brachycephaly in the immediate area of Bu Ajilat, these round-heads being of the general average stature of the area.

Omitting Morocco—for the reason already given—three physical types are generally recognized as entering into the composition of the Berbers of North Africa :

(a) Medium or often short dolichocephals, with an average stature of about 65 inches, and an average cephalic index of 72–73. The occiput is commonly projecting, often forming a distinct bulge, so that the head when viewed from above is distinctly pentagonal ; the face tends to be short and broad, with a low facial index, the cheek-bones well developed, the nose mesorrhine, the chin often prominent and often well bearded, the lips full ; the long bones heavily built, with the insertions of the chief muscles especially well marked ; the skin is swarthy, the eyes dark. This type is found in the mountains of Central Tunisia, in Algeria in the Province of Constantine, in the neighbourhood of Algiers, and in the far south generally, where it tends to exhibit negroid characters.

(b) Tall dolichocephals, with a stature of about 67 inches, and an average cephalic index of 74–75 ; the outline of the skull seen from above is generally

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oval, the supra-orbital ridges strongly marked ; the face is long, tending to oval, nose long and narrow, with chin square and rather scant beard. This type predominates in Central Tunisia, extending thence into Algeria, where except east of the Kabyle country it is for the most part absent from the coastal zone, while in the Aures Mountains, though the high stature is maintained, there is a tendency to brachycephaly generally attributed to an admixture with the round-headed stock.

(c) Short to medium brachycephals, with a stature rather under 65 inches ; degree of brachycephaly low, but the group includes a few hyperbrachycephalic individuals with indices between 85 and 90. The face is broad and short, the forehead round, nose short and rather broad, with an index of 70-72. This is the type found in Tripoli, in the Island of Jerba, and on the mainland opposite, as well as the littoral in the neighbourhood of Bu Ajilat. In Algeria it is especially strong among the Kabyle, and in the far south among the Beni M'zab, of whom many have a particularly white skin.

The Negroids that have been described from various parts of Barbary—an old term for the country west of Tripoli lying between the Sahara and Mediterranean which might well be reintroduced into literature—require no particular description. As would be expected, they are most numerous in the south, the most interesting point about them being that remains said to resemble them are found in neolithic burials.

These then, apart from the Arab element, con-

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stitute the racial types that it is possible to differentiate in the Berber population of Western Tripoli, Tunis and Algeria, and since each of these races has its known centre of origin—or at least of dispersion—it becomes possible to indicate the part played by various stocks in the history of North Africa. As might be expected, there is no difficulty in recognizing the short, dark, long-heads as the North African representatives of the proto-Egyptian stock of the Nile Valley, while measurements which it would be tedious to discuss here disclose their close affinity to the early neolithic inhabitants of France (the Beaumes-Chaudes caves and the dolmens of the Lozère) and the present-day Mediterraneaners of southern Europe, especially the purer representatives such as the Sardinians. They are, in fact, the “aborigines” of Barbary.

The narrow-nosed long-heads are so tall that there is only one white stock from which they can be derived, namely the Nordic of northern Europe, represented in its purest form in Scandinavia and preponderating in this country in East Anglia and some parts of Scotland. Briefly, the measurements of Nordics in northern Europe give stature, cephalic, nasal and facial indices so near to those of the tall Berbers that there can be no doubt that either the latter are derived from the former or that they share a common origin. This identification makes clear the source of the blond, light-eyed Berbers described on p. 129, these being none other than individuals in whom the Nordic strain is sufficiently pure to manifest itself in its typical physical characters.



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It has, indeed, actually been shown that the lightest-skinned Berbers are those of the tallest stature and the cephalic index of the Nordic, a fact so interesting as to justify the tabulation of the relevant measurements selected from the great work of Bertholon and Chantre :

|   | C.I.  | N.I.  | Stature |
|---|-------|-------|---------|
| Northern Berbers, blue-eyed, light-skinned (41) | 74·2  | 66·54 | 67 in.  |
| Frenchmen, long-headed, blue-eyed (20)          | 75·13 | 67·67 | 67 in.  |
| Swedes  | 75·0  | 67·5  | 67 in.  |

The date at which the Nordics entered North Africa is unknown, but that it is relatively remote is proved by the occurrence in an Egyptian tomb of the New Empire of a painting of light-skinned, green-eyed, light-haired Libyans. Apart from the intrinsic interest of this painting it is of great archæological importance as disposing finally of such ill-considered suggestions as that which makes the blond Berbers the descendants of the Vandal invaders of the fifth century.

The problem connected with the third group, the round-heads of medium or short stature, is less easy. The suggestion that these brachycephals are the descendants of the short brachycephals of southern Arabia, though the obvious one to make, presents difficulties in view of the relatively wide dispersion of the type. It might fairly be argued that so large a proportion of the conquerors of Spain (who came from North Africa and were later driven back there) were of southern Arabian origin, that this would

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explain the wide distribution of round-heads among the Berbers. Bertholon and Chantre, although they note that the skulls of the Berber brachycephals are not globular as are those of the European round-heads (Alpine race) and that the occipital region is flattened and the cranial vault very high (i.e. in general appearance these skulls resemble the round-headed population of Asia Minor rather than Europe), yet seem to consider that many of the short brachycephals of North Africa are more closely related to the brachycephals of France (Alpine race) than to those of Asia Minor. In endeavouring to come to a conclusion it must not be assumed that the same influence has been exerted equally, alike inland in the hills and in the coastal zone. With regard to the latter the enormous influence from the end of the fifteenth century onward of the "Barbary pirates," largely of Levantine origin, must not be forgotten; the North African coast was their home, and although they were occasionally defeated by the Christian mediæval powers they were never broken. Moreover, Jerba, one of the centres of round-headedness, is known to have been one of their strongholds. It would seem fair, then, to regard the coastal round-heads as owing their existence largely to this Levantine influence, and this would account for the high skull with flattened occiput. As for the round-heads of the interior, it is at least probable that we are dealing here with the remains of such a wave as we know carried round-headed Alpines, as the "Celtic" peoples, into Greece about 1000 B.C.

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The extinct Guanche of the Canary Islands showed at least as much racial mixture as their brethren of the mainland. Their remains indicate that besides tall, fair dolichocephalic and short, dark mesaticephalic elements, there was present a very short round-headed element, akin to the Alpines of Central Europe.

The Berbers are skilled agriculturalists and gardeners, while many are pastoralists as well. Some of the pastoralists practise an elaborate form of transhumance (the periodic to-and-fro movement of herds between definite regions of varying climate) differing from the familiar lowland-to-mountain type of Mediterranean lands in that there is a double movement, summer and winter, the latter in the Middle Atlas taking the tribes hundreds of miles from "home" so that they become virtually nomadic.

The social organization of the Berber differs entirely from that of the Arab, being as essentially democratic and suited to a sedentary life as that of the latter is aristocratic and apt for the nomadic existence. But although this typical contrast is true for by far the greater part of Barbary, it must be realized that it is not absolute. There are many sedentary Arabs in the country and some nomad Berbers; moreover, it is always difficult to decide whether any particular people not obviously Berber or Arab are to be regarded as arabized Berbers or as berberized Arabs. Some assistance in doubtful cases can be gained by considering their geographical position, the Arabs presenting a diminishing per-

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centage of the population from east to west. Thus in Tunis, with a total Islamic population of nearly two million, berberized Arabs number about half a million and true Berbers less than a hundred thousand, the latter clustering mainly in isolated masses, e.g. as a group of Abadite heretics on the Island of Jerba, and in the far south. Passing westwards to Algiers some 75 per cent. of the inhabitants are Berber or Berber-speaking, the remainder Arab or partially berberized Arabs, while some of the purest Berber groups in Barbary inhabit the Kabyle hills and the Aures Mountains. Farther west in Morocco it has been calculated that no more than 5 per cent. are Arabs, with perhaps another 5 per cent. of berberized Arabs, though a considerable number of the remaining 90 per cent. of the population do, apart from matters of religion, show a tinge of Arab influence.

The following account, though referring specifically to the social organization of the Kabyle, may be taken as typical of the political and social organization of the Berbers as a whole (excepting Tuareg), the essential feature of their society being the existence of a great number of small democratic communities, each entirely independent and governed solely by the will of the people.

The village is the administrative unit, to which the most complete autonomy is allowed. Two or more villages may be connected by administrative ties (not those of kinship) to form a tribe, and the union of several such tribes constitutes a confederation. In time of war only, a head is appointed for

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each tribe and for the confederation, but in ordinary times the confederation never interferes in the affairs of the tribe unless directly appealed to. The tribe takes no part in the local government of its villages, but performs certain administrative duties, e.g. the making of roads, the management of tribal property such as mosques, tombs of saints, and educational establishments, with the levying of the necessary taxes for these ; it determines questions of war and peace, and acts as arbiter in disputes between villages. A general assembly of the tribe is practically unknown, and its affairs are ordinarily managed by a deputation of the chief men from each of its various villages. These delegates do not hold any permanent office, but each village can send an indefinite number.

The effective government of the village is vested in the *jemâa*, the general assembly of the citizens, of which every adult man is a member. It meets once a week, and in theory every member has a right to speak, though in practice this right is only exercised by the elders and heads of families. For important decisions unanimity is required, and if the assembly fails to agree, reference may be made to the *jemâa* of another village or to some individual arbiter. The powers of the *jemâa* cover every matter great or small which concerns the village ; it exercises judicial authority both in civil and in criminal cases (the latter jurisdiction now curtailed by the French), and has the right to interfere in the private life of the individual.

The Amin (or Amekkeran) " chief," is appointed

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by the *jemâa* to hold the reins of government and carry out its decisions. As he constitutes the sole executive of the village state his duties are multifarious and comprehensive, but except in small matters relating to the maintenance of order he has no independence and no initiative, and he can take no action without the consent of the *jemâa*. He is chosen by the influential persons of the village (the choice being subject to ratification by the *jemâa*) and is always a member of one of the leading families, for although in principle any man may be Amin of his own village it is in fact necessary for him to be a wealthy man and one able to rely on the support of a powerful *sof* to uphold his authority. The Amin is aided by lieutenants whom he appoints to supervise the different quarters of the village and to keep him informed of all that passes.

The solidarity of its members is a marked feature in the life of the village; every one is helped at need in his harvesting and field work by the members of his quarter or of the village in general, and a man wishing to build a house can claim the assistance of the village, contributed under an organized scheme. Provision for the needs of the poor is made from the public revenue. The unit is not the individual but the family, and so close is the tie that each member is liable for crimes committed by any one of them, while frequently the property of a family is left undivided and the revenue enjoyed by all its members in common.

The village—in other respects so isolated and self-centred—is brought into contact with its neigh-

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bours through an organization called the *sof*, a fraternity and mutual aid society. Each village is divided into two opposed *sof*, and as these are seldom equally matched numerically, it is common for them to ally themselves with similar fraternities in neighbouring villages, until the ramifications of the league may extend throughout entire districts. Within the village the claims of the *sof* rank above all personal interests, and even ties of kinship are violated if the honour of the fraternity is at stake. A man who is a member of a powerful *sof* can feel safe alike from the vengeance of individuals and from the justice of the law, and will be supported by his fellow-members with every resource from perjury to murder. But although loyal to his *sof* while a member of it, the devotion of the Kabyle is dictated entirely by self-interest, and he thinks little of transferring his allegiance from his own to another *sof* if he feels he is likely to gain thereby. Beyond the village the cohesion of the fraternity is somewhat weakened, and although in time of civil war members of a *sof* will freely supply money and provisions to fellow-members, and will extend unstinted hospitality to fugitives, they would expect to be paid at a suitable money rate for any armed contingent they might send. The leaders of the *sof* are generally members of wealthy and powerful families; to them is entrusted the administration of the funds (raised by members' subscription) from which they may disburse large sums on secret services without being called upon to render account of their stewardship.

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Generally speaking the Berbers are good craftsmen, and their products are sufficiently well characterized to be distinctive. In architecture the use of straight lines, and in decorative enrichment the predominance of rectilinear geometrical designs, stand in evident opposition to the art commonly and conveniently, if rather inaccurately, described as "Arab." Thus the minarets of the Berber mosques are square, or sometimes hexagonal, contrasting profoundly with the circular form usual, e.g. in the Nile Valley, and this holds even for such world-famed structures as those of Morocco city and Seville in Spain. Exceptions are to be found in the tomb shrines of holy men, for which the Arabic *qubba*, with its circular, sometimes octagonal, cupola has been adopted, and in the discreet use of the arc above entrances framed by straight lines. Berber pottery, as exemplified by the fabrics of Algeria, is perhaps more characteristic and has certainly been more closely studied than that of any other part of Africa. This is not to be attributed to any striking beauty of these wares but rather to the interest aroused by the suggestion that it is closely akin to that of the predynastic Egyptians. Without that discussion for which there is no space here, it is fair to say that Kabyle pottery shows sufficient resemblance to that of the proto-Egyptian as to go well with the survival of the proto-Egyptian physical type among the Berber peoples. Turning to the minor arts, the silver jewellery of Algeria, particularly of the Aures Mountains, is characteristic and distinctly beautiful, especially when enriched with



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coral or enamel. Embroidery and weaving have to a greater extent come under Arabic influence, but even here a number of different schools of Berber design still exist.

Although consideration of the doctrines of orthodox Muhammadanism falls outside the scope of the present work, there are two manifestations of Islam which have so greatly influenced the life of the peoples of North Africa that it would be improper to omit a short reference to each. The first of these, the doctrine of *baraka*, is common to Arabs and Berbers, and, indeed, exists wherever Islam is practised, but since it has developed to an overwhelming extent among the Berbers it will be considered in this chapter, while the other institution, namely the religious fraternities of North Africa, since its importance and development is greatest among the Arabs, will be dealt with in Chapter X.

Literally the Arabic word *baraka* means "blessing," but in North Africa it is used to denote a mysterious force, a blessed virtue, which is from God, and which is most nearly connoted by the English word "holiness," so that the term as applied to persons possessing *baraka* in an exceptional degree may fairly be translated "saint." No man has ever possessed more *baraka* than the Prophet, and it is a portion of his *baraka* that is transmitted to the *shurafa* (sing. *sherīf*), his descendants in the male line through his daughter Fatima. Apart from the *shurafa* the commonest possessors of *baraka* are the heroes who have fallen fighting for

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Islam, and local holy men owing their sanctity perhaps to their descent and partly to a reputation for miracles performed during their lifetime. A combination of the two forms of holiness exists in the *baraka* of the reigning Sultan of Morocco : he not only has the holiness that pertains to him as head of the family of "shereefs" to which he belongs, but also that of the sultanship, i.e. of the "Vicegerent of God on his earth," perpetually renewed to him by forty saints who every morning pass over his head. It is on the Sultan's *baraka* that the welfare of the country depends ; when strong the crops are abundant, women give birth to healthy children, and the country prospers, and when in 1908 the sardine fishery was especially good this was attributed to the recent accession to the throne of a Sultan especially full of *baraka*. Others possessing much *baraka* who, though inferior to the *sherif*, form a kind of religious nobility, are the *marabtin* (*marabit* or *mrabit*), whence the origin of the French corruption *marabout*, heard all over North Africa to signify any holy man. *Baraka* is essentially a transmissible virtue, one of the most effective methods being for the saint to spit into the mouth of anyone he wishes to benefit, while the same result may be brought about by the two eating food together before parting ; in the latter case the holy man pronounces a traditional formula.

Of actual manifestations of *baraka* of social importance none is more striking than the sanctuary which is constituted by the shrines of saints. In

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one instance it is not only the area within the enclosing wall of the shrine, but the whole space lying between a series of cairns erected on spots from which the shrine becomes visible. Anyone who can see the tower of this saint's mosque is within his protection and so safe from every form of persecution. Such shrines often contain graves, and are then all the holier, the extraordinarily binding character of oaths sworn upon them being due to the *baraka* of their saint.

There is no limit to the miracles which take place at the shrines of saints, of whom many have the strongest objection to Christians and Jews. Thus Professor Westermarck—from whose work these remarks concerning *baraka* have been taken—was not allowed to approach one specially celebrated shrine, while, as is well known, there is a little town on the Atlantic coast in Northern Morocco which through its saints has long been kept free from Christian residents, since all who attempted to live there became ill and were obliged to leave. It cannot be over emphasized that *baraka* is extremely sensitive to external influences, by which it may be polluted and lessened. It is confidently stated that one reason why the Sultan Mulai 'Abdl'aziz lost his *baraka* was that Christians frequented his court; so, too, the barbers of certain out-of-the-way districts say that there is no *baraka* in the razors of their colleagues in Tangiers because they are sharpened by Christians, and a prayer said in a Jewish or Christian house is of no avail. Further, a Jew may not tread on a threshing floor or enter

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a granary, not should he approach a beehive lest the bees incontinently swarm.

The Tuareg or Tewarek (sing. Targui), known to the Arabs and to themselves as the Kel Tagilmus, the People of the Veil, inhabit the desert from Tuat to Timbuktu and from Fezzan to Zinder, some 300 miles west of Lake Chad. They consist of a number of tribes, or confederations of tribes, all having a common language, called Temajegh, and a particular form of script. The main divisions are : the People of Ahaggar, called Ahaggaren ; the Azjer or Azger Tuareg (probably the purest of the stock) ; the People of Air, called the Kel Air (or in Hausa Asbenawa, from Asben the Sudanese name for Air) ; and the Tuareg of the south-west, comprising the Ifoghas and Aulimmidan with those of the Niger and Timbuktu. Each group has a supreme chief, the *amenokal*, elected by the leaders of the composing tribes, the *amenokal* of the People of Air being the Sultan of Agades. The *amenokal* usually has little real authority and his tenure of office is precarious ; the succession, as that of the tribal chiefs, though not strictly hereditary, normally passes to the sister's son.

The tribes are divided into two distinct classes, the "nobles" (Imajegh), and the "servile" or "vassal" class (Imghad). The chief of a noble tribe is the leader in war and the dispenser of justice in peace, and in council with the heads of families he exercises authority over the Imghad tribes associated with his people, through the chiefs of these servile

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groups. Some of the Imghad tribes are rich and respected, and though they cannot change their allegiance and are bound to assist their overlords in time of war, they are in no sense considered as the property of the latter and are not expected to do menial work, all obligations being imposed collectively and not on any one Imghad. Both classes own slaves, and these—including musicians, who are looked down upon—really constitute a third social but non-tribal class falling into two categories, the household slaves and the outdoor slaves, the latter considered of higher status than the former, though both may, in the course of generations, rise to the class of Imghad. A man's status is governed by the class of his mother, so that should a man of the Imajegh marry an Imghad woman the children will be servile. Though descent is matrilineal the government of each unit is patriarchal, and in the main similar to that of a nomad Arab tribe (see pp. 232-3).

The wearing of the veil (*litham*) has assumed a ritual importance, and no self-respecting Tuareg, whether of noble or servile caste, will allow himself to be seen even by his intimate friends without it. In this veil the men live and sleep; they lift it up to eat, but when so doing hold their hand over the mouth. The veil consists of a long strip of cloth wound round the head so as to form a hood, and covering the mouth and nose, only a slit of about an inch wide being left in front of the eyes. In the north the nobles wear a black veil and the servile class a white—hence the term “Black” and

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“ White ” Tuareg. Although at the age of 16 or 17 the Tuareg youths begin to carry a sword, wear the characteristic stone arm-rings, and are regarded as full members of their tribe or village, the veil is not donned until about 25, its assumption being accompanied by much feasting and rejoicing in the family.

The Tuareg are a tall people. The noble class attains an average stature of 69 inches, a figure definitely higher than that given for vassals or serfs. Small-boned, with no superficial muscular development, they have astonishing powers of physical endurance and bear themselves with great dignity and grace ; their features are finely cut, with a firm pointed chin, a broad, slightly retreating forehead, heavy brow-ridges, and prominent but not high cheek-bones, the whole profile somewhat accentuated. The skin is a reddish yellow, the eyes dark, hair long, black, and wavy. As a group the “ noble ” Tuareg are frankly dolichocephalic, with an index of just over 73, which is only slightly higher than that of a large “ mixed ” group. Moreover, though individuals with round or almost round heads exist, these are rare, and the Tuareg may be regarded as the most long-headed of the Northern Hamites ; thus the Berbers of Biskra—who seem to be the next most long-headed—have an average cephalic index of over 74, and the average of several hundred Kabyle gives a figure of nearly 77. As for the few round-heads, considering all that has been said (pp. 133–4) about round-headed elements in North Africa, it seems reasonable to conclude

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that we may see in these Tuareg traces of their blood, though whether this be recent or of some antiquity there is nothing to show.

Although the servile class shows no great difference in head-shape or in stature, skin colour, hair, and the nasal indices do, however, indicate a considerably larger admixture of negro blood, for though the averages do not greatly differ, there is a much greater straddle among the lower-class; moreover, the skin is often darker and the hair may be frizzly, a character not noted among the nobles.

In character the Tuareg are independent, brave, impulsive, and mendacious, chivalrous to women and with a great love of poetry and music. Essentially camel nomads, though also possessing sheep and goats, they are a hardy and abstemious people, and before the coming of the French were notorious raiders—indeed raiding might be regarded as the national sport—pillaging outlying Arab settlements and raiding trade routes, only such caravans being safe as paid for passage and convoy. The characteristic weapons are sword, spear and the arm-dagger, held on the arm by a ring. They neither dye, spin, nor weave; mat-making and leather-working is carried on by the women.

Monogamy is customary, and the position of the Tuareg women has no real parallel elsewhere among Muhammadans. They are held in great honour and allowed their entire liberty, they take their share in public life and on tribal councils, they own property, choose their own husbands, do not veil their faces, and mix on all occasions with the men;

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it is the women who teach the children and are the repositories of learning and best versed in the traditions of the people. The liberty the Tuareg accorded to their women shocked that great traveller Ibn Batuta; commenting on the status of the Tuareg women he describes how he visited one of his Tuareg friends and found him sitting on a carpet, while on a couch in the middle of the house was his wife, in conversation with a man seated at her side: "I said to Abu Mohammed: 'Who is this woman?' 'It is my wife,' he replied. 'The individual with her, who is he?' 'It is her friend.' 'And are you pleased at such a state of affairs, you who have lived in our countries and who know the precepts of Holy Writ?' 'The relations of women with men in this country are good and are correct, they are right and honourable; they arouse no suspicion. Besides, our women are not like those of your country.'" Ibn Batuta adds: "I was surprised at his stupidity. I left his house and never returned. . . ." A recent traveller sums up the position of women by quoting the Tuareg proverb: "Men and women towards each other are for the eyes and for the heart, and not only for the bed."

The frequent use of the cross in ornament seems to point to a survival of early Christian influence, but to-day the Tuareg are nominally Muslims, though lax in religious observance. As among most other Muslims, animism is part of everyday belief; it is commonly accepted that below the surface the desert is peopled by a class of supernatural beings who delight in playing mischievous pranks on the



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wayfarer, and all unexplained phenomena are referred to invisible agencies, while the mysterious droning or drumming heard on a still night in many parts of the desert is the voice of the jinn conversing among themselves.

The Tuareg alone among the people of North Africa possess an individual non-Arabic script, T'ifinagh, which Evans and Petric have shown to be the modern representative of a single system common to Egypt and Crete in the East and Spain in the West. T'ifinagh is alphabetic, not syllabic, but owing to the abbreviations practised and to the absence of all vowels except "a" it assumes a pseudo-syllabic quality and has come to resemble a sort of shorthand. The alphabet consists of from between twenty and thirty symbols, varying from place to place, in addition to about twelve ligatures of two or sometimes three letters. Among most tribes a knowledge of T'ifinagh is now confined to the older women and a few men, for although in olden days all the Tuareg women knew how to write, and taught the children, the younger generation are largely illiterate. The Ifadcyen—one of the oldest and purest of the tribes of Air—are perhaps the last of the Tuareg to retain the current use of the T'ifinagh script with a knowledge of reading and writing it, the holy men and scribes usually employing only Arabic. But although the script is often spoken of as Tuareg and, indeed, is most highly developed among them, this really signifies no more than that they alone use it at the present day; it is found far and wide in North Africa,

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where no Tuareg have ever been and where it must be regarded as Hamitic (or "Libyan") in a wide sense, indeed inscriptions are particularly plentiful in the coastal region of Eastern Algeria.

The Tibu, stated to be the direct descendants of the ancient Garamantes, inhabit the Tibesti massif from which they take their name, 'Ti-bu, "Rock people." Until ousted by the Senussi they also occupied the Oasis of Kufra. There are two sections, the northern Teda and the southern Daza, through whom the Tibu gradually merge in the negroid population of the Central Sudan. This intermingling with the blacks dates from remote times, but the full-blooded Tibu of the northern section are in the main Berbers, and although the type of the men is somewhat coarser than the Tuareg, that of the women has been described as almost the finest in Africa. They were formerly a powerful people, and in the sixteenth century constituted a large proportion of the military force of the Kingdom of Kanem. They use the throwing-knife, and until recently were at enmity with their neighbours the Tuareg. Although nominally converted to Islam in the eighteenth century many still practise heathen rites; thus, among the Baele during prayers addressed to Yido—the Supreme Being—a sacred stone is sprinkled with flour and with the blood of a sacrificed sheep.

The Fulani (Fula, Filani, Fellata, Fulbe), are found scattered all over North Africa from the

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Upper Niger to Senegal, either as inoffensive nomad herdsmen or settled among alien peoples as the ruling caste, and are the dominant political power in Northern Nigeria, where with a total numerical strength of about two millions they are specially massed in Sokoto, Kano, and Adamawa (formerly Yola) Provinces. The Fulani, in spite of numerous references in literature to a semitic origin, must be regarded as Hamites, who, originally a branch of the Northern group, gradually spread their influence over the Western Sudan and Upper Senegal during the days of the Ghana Empire, and had found their way into Northern Nigeria by the end of the thirteenth century. Their conquest of that country dates from 1804, when the revolt of the Muslims (Fulani and those of the tribes which had accepted Islam combined) against the pagan overlords took place and a holy war was declared, Osman Dan Fodio of the Toronkawa family (a Fulani sub-tribe) being appointed Sarkin Musulmi, or Chief of the Muslims, with his capital at Sokoto. By the end of 1810 the Fulani dominion was firmly established over all the Hausa states, and the country was portioned out into the present Emirates, each under a Fulani governor. For the century preceding British occupation at the end of the nineteenth century the Fulani Empire extended, with the exception of Bornu and the more remote pagan districts, over the length and breadth of the Northern Provinces, but before the arrival of the British it was showing signs of dissolution.

As found to-day in West Africa the Fulani are

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divided into two sections, the "Cattle Fulani," of whom the Abore or Bororo are the most typical, and the settled Fulani, or Fulanin Gidda, as they are called in Hausa (*gidda*, house). The nomads are the purest representatives of the hamitic element in Nigeria—straight-haired, straight-nosed, thin-lipped, long-headed, of slender physique and skin reddish brown in colour, the women distinguished by their beauty of countenance and graceful carriage. In character they are exceedingly reserved, distrustful and shy, and, as it is said, shrewd and artful, so that no African can excel them for dissimulation and finesse. The settled Fulani, on the other hand, by free intermarriage and wholesale concubinage with the races whom they have conquered, are fast being absorbed by the Negro, as is shown by the general coarsening in build and features and the frequent appearance among them of the frizzly hair and prognathous mouth of the Negro. Muhammadans by religion, they do not intermarry with the pagan Cattle Fulani, and have given up the essentially Fulani customs still followed by the latter.

These nomads, who number about three hundred thousand, depend for their livelihood on their cattle, which are, however, never killed for food except at festivals, the staple article of diet being milk, drunk fresh, or sour as butter-milk. Meat and milk may never be eaten on the same day. The milking is done by men or childless women, and there are no milking rites. The herds are not all their own property, settled Fulani and wealthy Hausa often giving them charge of cattle to take to pastures.

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Their camps, *ruga*, are of the shelter type, rude beehive huts with frames of sticks, thatched with dried grass, and the cattle are herded at night within a zareba of thorns, tied together in pairs with their heads pointing different ways. The cattle are trained to break and scatter in the bush at a word of command from the herdsman or at a note from his pipe. The origin of cattle among the Bororo Fulani is ascribed to a water spirit who brought twenty-two cattle from the river and divided them between his sons by a woman called Bajemongo, these sons being the progenitors of the tribe.

The Fula speak a language (Ffulde) of the highest importance for the understanding of many African language problems, especially the noun classes of the Bantu. That great African authority the late Maurice Delafosse considered that Ffulde was originally a negro language; in spite of the weight which must be attached to his opinion, the more recent and more probable point of view is that it represents a very old type of speech from which the hamitic languages have arisen. Adopting a metaphor of relationship, Ffulde is not of the same generation as Berber or Somali, and they cannot be regarded as sister tongues; rather does Ffulde belong to an older generation, perhaps the aunt or possibly the great-aunt, as Professor Werner has suggested. The most striking features in the structure of Ffulde is a twofold class-division applied to nouns. The first division is into four classes—persons, things, augmentatives, and diminutives—sex being expressed by the use of distinct words.

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The second class-division is into a relatively large number of classes, each marked by a different suffix, some authorities reckoning thirty-five and others an even larger number, while each class has its distinct pronoun which stands in a recognizable relationship to the suffix. But whereas in Bantu the words and therefore the things brought into each class seem often to form a heterogeneous mixture, in Ffulde the purpose of the classes is much clearer, for the most part each containing names of a particular series of objects. Thus the suffix *-am* is essentially applied to liquids, e.g. *adiam* (water), *kosam* (milk), the suffix *-hi* essentially applied to trees, the suffix *-re* to things in the mass, e.g. palm nuts, rice, etc. Giving due weight to classes such as these and also to the vocabulary of the Bantu, Sir Harry Johnston put forward a view, which seems to be generally accepted, that the origin of the Bantu languages is to be explained on the supposition that a language similar to Fula was that of a dominant group in the midst of Sudanic-speaking peoples, the vocabulary of the latter being assimilated, and traces of the Fula-like mode of thought and expression persisting in the new group of languages which we speak of as Bantu. It may, indeed, be pointed out that Mbugu, a Sudanic language of East Africa, is in the course of acquiring Bantu class prefixes, though its roots are decidedly non-Bantu.

## CHAPTER VII

### HALF-HAMITES AND NILOTES

As already stated, the Hamites entered Africa—or, if the African hypothesis of their origin be maintained, entered Negroland—in a long succession of waves, of which the earliest may have been as far back as the end of the pluvial period. It is the purpose of this chapter to discuss some of the main results of the mixture of the Hamite with the Negro and to define some of the major groups of mixed blood to which their invasions gave rise.

All these mixed populations are Negro-Hamitic, or hamiticized Negroes (though some of the members of the Bantu group carry but little hamitic blood and show no great signs of hamitic culture) with here and there no doubt some pygmy admixture. Until a better terminology is invented, based on more precise knowledge than is available at the present time, some such grouping as the following seems best; it must, however, be noted that the groups are defined by varying criteria, that owing to the lack of physical measurements language plays far too big a part, and that in this classification are included all the people commonly called Negroes, excepting only the true West African Negro and a

few peoples provisionally excluded mainly because so little is known about them.

The mechanism of the origin of the Negro-Hamitic peoples will be understood when it is realized that the incoming Hamites were pastoral Caucasians—arriving wave after wave—better armed as well as quicker witted than the dark agricultural Negroes, for it must be remembered that there was no Bronze Age in Africa, and we may believe that the Negro, who is now an excellent iron-worker, learnt this art from the Hamite. Diagrammatically the process may be described as follows. At first the Hamites, or at least their aristocracy, would endeavour to marry hamitic women, but it cannot have been long before a series of peoples combining negro and hamitic blood arose; these, superior to the pure Negro, would be regarded with disdain by the next incoming wave of Hamites and be pushed farther inland to play the part of an incoming aristocracy *vis à vis* the Negroes on whom they impinged. And this process was repeated with minor modifications over a long period of time, the pastoralists always asserting their superiority over the agriculturists, who constantly tended to leave their own mode of life in favour of pastoralism or at least to combine it with the latter. The end result of one series of such combinations is to be seen in the Zulu, of another in the Baganda, while an even more striking result is offered by the symbiosis, to use a biological term, of the Bahima of Ankole and the Bahera. The Bahima, a tall cattle-owning aristocracy, with narrow noses and long faces, so



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unlike the Negro (though they always have negro hair) that Johnston when he first saw them thought they were Egyptian soldiers left behind by Emin Pasha, live in the country of the shorter broader-faced negro Bahera; the latter normally provide them with grain, and no doubt in the past there has been intermarriage (witness the woolly hair of even the Bahima aristocracy), though at the present time each group is said to keep to itself.

These examples give a rough idea of the almost infinite variety within the great mass of hamiticized Negroes, so that it is not surprising that classification is difficult and its results often so doubtful that even main groups present an indistinct edge and the observer is compelled to fall back on the relatively easily determined facts of language. With this warning the following may be regarded as the primary divisions of the hamiticized Negro (Fig. 3, p. 181):

- (1) The half-Hamites.
- (2) Nilotes, using the term in the rather narrow sense defined below (pp. 170-1).
- (3) Bantu.

In this Chapter we shall briefly describe half-Hamites and Nilotes, leaving the great mass of Bantu Africa to Chapter VIII.

The half-Hamites are limited to East Africa and East Central Africa. They occupy the greater part of Kenya Colony, with that part of Uganda which runs northwards to the Sudan boundary, as well as much of the northern portion of Tanganyika territory.

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As already stated, they have arisen as the result of the mixture of Hamite with Negro, and as the name implies they carry a considerable amount of hamitic blood, i.e. definitely more than almost all the Bantu and Nilotes. This relative preponderance of the hamitic side of their ancestry is reflected alike in speech, appearance, and culture. They all speak languages of hamitic type, and although their skins are dark their faces are generally negroid rather than negro, the difference being especially obvious in the nose. Culturally they are predominantly pastoralists, indeed many of their tribes depend entirely on their herds, leading the semi-nomadic life that this entails. Apart from the criterion of language there are Bantu tribes that in one respect or another conform to the conditions just cited, e.g. many of the Bantu Akikuyu are no more pure negroes than are the half-hamitic but sedentary Nandi, while the pastoralism of the Bahima (Bantu) is at least comparable with that of the half-hamitic Masai. The half-Hamites should then be defined as hamitic-speaking, predominantly pastoral negroids, and it may be added that their extreme range is from the neighbourhood of Lake Rudolph in Kenya in the north to 5° or 6° S. in Tanganyika territory.

The chief tribes are the Masai, Nandi, Lumbwe, and Keyo (these two may be regarded as subdivisions of the Nandi), the Suk—an offshoot of the Nandi—the Turkana, the Karamojong, and probably the Didinga, the Topotha and Iteso. All these tribes are moderately tall and slender, long-

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headed—though not so long-headed as the tall negroids (Nilotes) of the Nile Valley, with whom affinities may be traced via the Lotuko and Bari—sometimes long-faced, and with noses (and indeed features generally) which are far removed from those of the true Negro. The Masai, Nandi, and Suk, perhaps because we know so little about the other half-hamitic tribes, are to be regarded as specially typical of the group.

Physically these tribes—and even the Turkana, in spite of the reputation for size enjoyed by the latter—are not particularly tall, their average stature being 66 to 67 inches. Masai, Nandi and Turkana give a cephalic index of 73–74, but the Suk are mesaticephalic with an index around 77. The noses of the Masai are notably finer than those of the other tribes just cited, the indices being—Masai 76, Nandi and Suk 84 and 85, Turkana 90. In colour, too, the Masai betrays his Caucasian blood, for his skin is described as tinged with reddish brown.

Ignoring for the purpose of description recent changes forced on the tribes as the result of European colonization, the Masai and Turkana are nomadic herdsmen, as probably all their congeners once were, but at the present day the Nandi, Suk, and Iteso are sedentary, leading an agricultural life in addition to owning cattle. The majority of the remaining tribes are best described as semi-nomadic and are doubtless on the way to becoming of fixed habitat, like the Nilotes, even if cattle remain their chief interest.

The men of the half-Hamites for the most part

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go naked except for a skin cape worn by the elders ; girls and women wear well-dressed leather petticoats of some length, often edged with beads, and whenever they can afford it a great mass of brass wire in coils on the wrists and arms and especially round the neck, coming low on the chest. The great majority, perhaps all these tribes, remove the lower incisors. The Masai, Nandi and Suk practise circumcision and clitoridectomy.

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of their cattle to the Masai and kindred tribes ; not only must their practical function be considered, but also their ceremonial value, indeed the prominence that grass has in ritual among these tribes is due to the fact that it is the food of their beloved animals. Hollis gives a translation of a Masai text :

“ As with people, each cow is known by name ; there is a saying . . . one cow resembles a man's head . . . if a man has a cow which he looks after and it bears, it enables him to live, for he can marry and have children and thus become rich. . . . Whenever there is a drought the women fasten grass on their clothes and offer up prayers to God. . . . Whenever warriors return from a raid and it is desired to praise those who have killed some of the enemy, a girl takes a small gourd of milk and having covered it with green grass sprinkles it over them. . . . The Masai love grass very much, for they say, ‘ God gave us cattle and grass, we will not separate the things God has given us.’ ”

Among the Suk, and this may be true of the other tribes, cattle are so important that if an adjective stands by itself the noun it qualifies is always understood to be “ cow.” Again, in Suk even the skin of

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an ox has a different word to the skin of any other animal, and the verb to drink, if the fluid be milk, is different from the word meaning to drink any other liquid, while an ordinary gourd has a name different from that of one used to collect milk. Moreover, milk is so sacred among the Nandi, who it will be remembered are agriculturists as well as pastoralists, that special precautions are taken to prevent the mixing of milk and meat in the stomach ; thus when meat has been eaten, no milk may be drunk for twelve hours, and then only after salt and water have been swallowed.

The Masai dwelling-place, called *tembe*, is of a peculiar type, rather like a long, flat-roofed tunnel of brushwood and mud, divided into family compartments each with its own door ; the whole is surrounded by a thorn fence, and the cattle herded within this at night. The Nandi and the Suk may be said to live in garden settlements, each man having his own homestead in or near his fields of grain. Near the huts are the granaries, and here and there the *sigroinet*, the communal sleeping-places of the unmarried warriors. Here the unmarried girls visit the young men, staying with them for a few days at a time. No married women may enter these huts, which are looked after by the girls while their lovers are away at war or raiding. There is also an assembly, or club-house, frequented by the warriors and in which the old men drink beer. Youths and girls generally live in huts by themselves or with old women. A man will keep a few head of cattle near his house, but for most of the year the

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greater part of the cattle are herded on the grazing grounds, necessarily at some distance from the cultivation. No doubt the Nandi also were originally herdsmen, with a mode of life resembling that of the Masai, but they are now capable agriculturists, though cattle-herding is still the chief occupation and interest of the men, and their attitude towards cattle is that of the Masai.

Among all these tribes, besides the ordinary functional divisions of boys, warriors, and elders, there is a well-developed system of age-grades. All boys who are circumcised at the same time are said to belong to the same age or cycle, each cycle lasting about  $7\frac{1}{2}$  years and starting from a circumcision ceremony. Since circumcision is not performed until after puberty (generally between 13 and 17 years of age) it will be noted that there is some difference in age between youths of the same age-grade, and it is probably due to this that in each age-grade there are three divisions called "fires," the members of each division sitting round their own hearths and not allowing the members of other divisions to join them. The importance of these age-grades among the half-Hamites lies in the fact that it is the warriors of each succeeding age-grade who are responsible for the ordering of the country. The great ceremony of handing over the country from one age-grade to the other takes place about every  $7\frac{1}{2}$  years at a period some four years after the men of the younger age-grade were circumcised. All the adult bachelors, i.e. warriors, collect together, and the *orkoiyot*, chief "medicine-man" (p. 164),

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slaughters a white bullock ; the meat is eaten by the men of the older age-grade, each of the younger grade cutting a small ring from the hide and putting this on one of his fingers. The *orkoiyot* stands near a stool about which is heaped cow-dung studded with the fruit of a particular shrub. The members of the older age-grade stand up, while the younger warriors, who are now receiving the control of the country, sit down. On a signal from the *orkoiyot* the outgoing age-grade divest themselves of the warrior's skin and put on the fur garments of the elders. The new controllers of the country are then informed that the safety of the land and the welfare of the inhabitants are in their hands, and are solemnly warned to guard the land of their fathers. Names are given to each age-grade, generally as it would seem derived from some peculiarity in their behaviour or event in contemporary history.

Among the Masai the young warriors subsist entirely on milk, meat, and blood ; they may not smoke, nor touch intoxicants. They do not live with their families, but, as already mentioned, in separate kraals with the immature unmarried girls, from whom each selects a lover. A man does not become an elder until he marries, which in old days might be postponed until he was over thirty.

There is no organization resembling age-grades among women, but the girls are instructed in their privileges and duties at the time that clitoridectomy is performed.

In all these tribes the age-grade must be looked upon not only as the organization by which the

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country is run, but also as the instrument of military operations, i.e. in the main of raids, and it was largely due to the respect which the Masai forays inspired that their customs have been adopted to a considerable extent by such East African Bantu tribes as the Akamba, Wataita, Kikuyu, and Wachagga (p. 214). Nevertheless it would seem that it is just this pastoral semi-military organization of the half-Hamites that explains how it is that they have never founded any state or polity analogous to the great lacustrine kingdoms of Uganda or Bunyoro.

Among the half-Hamites the most important individual in the tribe is the "medicine-man." The Nandi *orkoiyot*, whose functions and importance seem to be imitative of those of the Masai *ol-oiboni*, is the principal medicine-man and supreme chief of the race; he is a diviner and foretells the future, interprets dreams, and is skilled in the interpretation of omens and the averting of ill luck. The Nandi look to their *orkoiyot* for instruction when to plant their crops; he obtains rain for them; through him women and cattle are fruitful, and no war-party could expect to meet with success unless he approved of the expedition. It is obvious then that his powers and functions are much the same as those attributed by the Shilluk to their king (pp. 173-6); yet this parallel is not altogether true, for although the person of the *orkoiyot* is usually regarded as sacred, Kimnyole was clubbed to death by his own people in 1890 on account of the calamities—famine, sickness, and a raid in which 500 warriors perished—for which he was held responsible.



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The half-Hamites generally believe in a God associated with the firmament. By the Masai this being is known as Naiteru-Kop, the Beginner of Things, the Creator of the present order, though now, like so many African deities, he takes comparatively little interest in his world. In fact the word Eng-ai, a term used indefinitely and impersonally but especially applied to the rain, the sky, and volcanoes, seems to be applied to the power to whom the Masai pray. We have rather more information concerning the Nandi; here the supreme deity is Asista, the sun, who dwells in the sky, created man and beast, is acknowledged a benefactor, and to whom prayers are addressed. There are also kindly and malevolent gods associated with the thunder, who probably correspond to Ilat—the rain—of the Suk, whose supreme God is Tororut, the sky. According to some accounts Ilat is himself the supreme God and Lord of life and death. Besides these rather vague powers in the firmament, the spirits of departed ancestors, being held responsible for good and bad fortune and especially for sickness and death, are propitiated by the Masai and Nandi with offerings whenever this is considered necessary. No doubt the same is true of the Suk, among whom the belief appears to be general that a man's spirit passes into a snake at death, so that if a snake enters a house it is said that the spirit of a dead relative is hungry and milk is poured on its trail and meat and tobacco offered to it.

Of actual prayers we know little; perhaps the most precise information refers to the Nandi, among

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whom there is a definite attitude of prayer, the commonest petition running somewhat as follows :

“ God, I beseech thee cover the children and the cattle ; do I not approach thee morning and evening ? . . . Spirits of our ancestors, O guard us ! ”

And when the warriors are on a raid their mothers will spit towards the sun in the early morning, crying out, “ Asis, give us health ! ”

The usual custom among these tribes is to expose the body of a deceased person where it will be devoured by hyenas and vultures. Medicine-men and a few old and influential people are, however, buried. Here again we have more knowledge of the Nandi practice than of those of other tribes. After death the body is carried at nightfall a few hundred yards to the west of the hut and placed on the ground, a man being laid on his right side, a woman on her left. When depositing the body the relatives cry : “ Hyenas, come and eat ! ” If on a visit on the second day after death the body has not been disturbed, a goat is killed and some of the meat placed on or near the corpse to attract the attention of the wild beasts, but should the latter still not come it is inferred that the deceased has been killed by witchcraft, and steps are taken to discover who is responsible. It is worthy of note that it is no part of the duties of the *orkoiyot* to determine who is guilty, and in this as in many other respects he differs notably from the “ witch-doctor ” of the Bantu tribes of South Africa.

Although not true half-Hamites it is convenient to

## HALF-HAMITES

give here (for the reasons set forth on p. 177), a short description of the Bari- and Lotuko-speaking tribes.

Physically the Bari are tall men with an average stature of 68 inches and a cephalic index of from 73 to 74, while the Bari-speaking tribes of the west bank are consistently shorter, and rounder headed, the height of Kakwa and Fajelu being about 66 inches with a cephalic index ranging round 76.

Of the social organization and beliefs of these west bank Bari-speaking tribes we know little or nothing. Of the Bari of the eastern bank we can say that they are divided into a number of clans with patrilineal descent, some of these clans having such relationship to animals that it seems reasonable to suppose that they once had a totemic organization. Here again the rainmaker is the head of the tribe, though his position is very different from that of the divine king of the Nilotes, for when he failed to produce rain he was incontinentally slain and a more satisfactory and competent ruler sought. Besides the rain-maker there are chiefs whose native name signifies "father of the land" (pp. 63, 65), the term being applied to the man, or his descendants, who first cleared and planted a particular territory, and in virtue of this performs certain magical rites before sowing, during the growing of the crop, or before hunting. It is on account of their magical powers that these "fathers" are of importance, since without them no success could be expected in hunting or gardening, and even fishing has its "fathers." The ceremonies to produce rain are rather elaborate, but the essential features seem to be the pouring of water

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and oil on to certain rain-stones—usually of quartz—and then the smearing of these with the contents of the stomach of a sacrificed goat. A summary account of the process ran as follow :

“ The rain-maker has certain green and white stones in a pot. He washes these in water and places them on a big stone [discovered later to be an old grindstone]. He smears the rain-stone with simsin oil and sacrifices a black goat near the stone. Then he, his assistants, and the old men eat of this and the rain comes.”

It may be added that this ceremony would commonly take place at the grave of a rain-making ancestor, or at a special shrine which was probably associated with him.

The Lotuko-speaking tribes include the Lotuko, the Lokoïya, and the Lango. These tribes are dolichocephalic, with indices ranging from 73 to something over 74, the Lotuko being very tall, about 70 inches, while their congeners are some 2 inches shorter. They are divided into totemic clans with patrilineal descent, the most obvious feature of their totemism being the strongly held belief that at death every individual becomes his clan animal. Almost all that is known of these tribes applies especially to a particular group of Lotuko, whose “ capital ” is Tarangole. This community has crocodile, monkey, elephant, white ant, and snake clans ; of these the crocodile is the most powerful, and to this clan its rain-makers belong. Rain-making is an extremely complicated series of ceremonies, and here again the chief part is played by rain-stones, with certain sacred spears as subsidiaries, the water in which these are

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laid being brought from a sacred pool where live the crocodiles incarnating the rain-making ancestors.

The burial customs of this group are particularly interesting, affording as they do an example of the rather widely spread belief that the reproductive energy and prosperity of the people is in some way associated with the digging-up of the bones of the dead, done among the Lotuko from three to six months after death. Another interesting feature is the very rapid burial practised, followed by the construction of the *nametere*, an object which can only be regarded as a very rough and degenerate representation of the corpse, in connection with which the first mourning rites are held. It is difficult to resist the belief that the *nametere* represents a last abortive attempt to preserve the corpse for these ceremonies, in other words a once attempted but now forgotten mummification.

The second great group of hamiticized Negroes are the Nilotes (Fig. 3, p. 181), geographically limited to the Nile Valley or its immediate neighbourhood, where they extend from some 200 miles south of Khartum to Lake Kioga, one group, the Jaluo (or Nilotic-speaking Kavirondo, as opposed to the Bantu-speaking Kavirondo) even reaching the north-east shores of Lake Victoria. Although they extend into Uganda, their centre is the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, where they constitute by far the strongest of the ethnic units into which the blacks of the Nile Valley can be divided. But before describing the Nilotes it will be convenient to say

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something about the general ethnic problem presented by the Nile basin.

The Nilotes speak a Sudanic language, as do all the tribes of the Nile area, but within this great language family so many variations occur, even in the Nile Valley, that taking into consideration our relatively limited knowledge of physical characters considerable interest attaches to Westermann's attempt to classify them on linguistic grounds, it being understood that he uses the word "Nilotic" to signify no more than "appertaining to the Nile basin," while the ethnologist, as will shortly be clear uses the term to signify a well-defined physical type associated with a particular culture. Westermann's classification is as follows :

1. The high Nilotic group, comprising Mittu, Madi, Abukaya, Abaka, Luba, Wira, Lendu, and Moru.

2. The Middle Nilotic group, comprising Shilluk, Anuak, Beir, Jur, Belanda, and many of the peoples of Eastern Uganda, Acholi, Lango, Aturu, and Jaluo.

3. The Low Nilotic group, comprising Dinka and Nuer.

It will be noted that this classification though of wider geographical scope yet embraces the whole area of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, although the Bari, with their numerous "sub-tribes," and the Lotuko-speaking tribes are not mentioned. Westermann classifies the former with the tribes called half-Hamites in this volume, i.e. with the Masai, Turkana, etc., to which he would also assign the Lotuko-speaking tribes. With this grouping before

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us we can delimit the Nilotes in the ethnic sense as comprising the Shilluk, Anuak, Lango, Jaluo, and probably one group of people called Jur (though here we do not know how far the people have changed while retaining their tribal name), the Dinka, and Nuer. The Acholi and Belanda no doubt are of Nilotic origin, but in the former certainly and perhaps in the latter the physical characters have been modified by mixture with a foreign stock or stocks, and this may be true of the Lango. In the high Nilotic linguistic group the majority of Westermann's constituents, with the possible exception of the Madi, constitute a little-known group of inter-Congo-Nile tribes which have yet to be investigated.

Physically the Nilotes—whose most typical representatives are the Shilluk and Dinka—are tall, “black” dolichocephals, with an average stature of 70 inches or perhaps a little over, and a very long head with a cephalic index of about 72. The hamitic element is strongest in the Shilluk, among whom it is not uncommon to meet men with well-shaped features, including well-modelled foreheads, thin lips, noses with high bridges, and nostrils that are by no means coarse. Indeed the majority of Shilluk are very obviously Negroid rather than Negro, while in spite of their dark skin and their no doubt preponderant negro blood the Nilotes are culturally far more Hamitic than Negro, being so essentially pastoral that it is a commonplace that the Dinka generally fail to grow even enough grain to keep themselves comfortably in meal and beer from one harvest to another.

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The men for the most part go naked, and even where this is not the case the genitals are left uncovered ; the women wear leather aprons in front and behind. The lower incisors are generally removed, and cicatrices on the forehead are the rule ; these probably are, or at one time were, tribal marks. In contradistinction to their neighbours on the Congo side of the Nile-Congo divide (p. 89) human sacrifice is very rare and cannibalism is unknown. Psychically the Nilotes show an aloofness and pride of race, with a lack of desire for European clothes or trade objects which is probably unparalleled elsewhere in Africa. Their predominant pastoralism is reflected in the almost religious esteem in which they hold their cattle. Among the Dinka there is a well-defined initiation ceremony at which the father of the young man presents his son with a bull, and it is no exaggeration to say that the youth attaches himself so strongly to this animal that the process called by psychologists "identification" takes place ; he will pass hours singing to and playing with his bull, he will be known to his associates by the name of his bull, and the death of the latter is a true bereavement. It is not then surprising that cattle are not killed for meat except on ceremonial occasions, the diet of the Nilotes being mainly milk and grain. As among the pastoral tribes of South Africa, women have practically no dealings with the cattle during the period of their sexual life, but their care is entirely entrusted to the men and boys.

The broad spear is the typical weapon of the



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Nilotes, though some Dinka in the west of the Bahr-el-Ghazal have bows and arrows, presumably borrowed from their non-Nilotic neighbours. The Dinka of the Sudd and the Nuer are great hunters of the hippopotamus, its flesh forming a considerable part of their diet.

The social organization of the Nilotes varies from tribe to tribe. The Dinka present a congeries of tribes, not only occupying the banks of the Nile but extending far into the basin of the Bahr-el-Ghazal, all independent and with no evidence of ever having come under one leader. They have a clan organization with patrilineal totems. The less numerous Skilluk (though they number some 50,000) are united into a strong nation with a king who is supreme spiritual and temporal head, and if they ever were totemistic in the typical sense in which the Dinka are, this is not so at the present day. The Shilluk and Dinka are the only two Nilotic tribes concerning whom we have reliable information, and among both these peoples the ruler, whether Shilluk king or Dinka tribal headman, is the rain-maker and belongs to that class to which Sir James Frazer has applied the term of "Divine King." It is on account of the typical character of the divine kingship among these tribes, and the part which its existence among them has played in our knowledge of this institution, that somewhat undue space must be allotted to the subject.

Our knowledge is most complete with regard to the Shilluk king. Formerly he was not allowed to go into battle, and even now he keeps up consider-

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able state and retains much of his old authority, while he is officially allowed an armed bodyguard. He rules his people from Fashoda (about 8 miles from the Fashoda of history, of which the true name is Kodok) and no more eloquent evidence of his power can be offered than the imposing artificial mound upon which stands his homestead. To understand the divine nature of the king it is necessary to digress to the beginnings of the Shilluk nation. This traces its origin to one Nyakang, who, with his followers split from the parent stock, then inhabiting part of the Eastern Bahr-el-Ghazal, and, wandering forth and conquering as he went, was strong enough to found a dynasty and nation. Nyakang is the true culture hero of the Shilluk, and like so many great men (for he must be regarded as historical, and probably lived in the early seventeenth century) he did not die but vanished in a great wind. Semi-divine or divine honours have been paid to him since his disappearance, and in each king his spirit is supposed to be immanent, this immanence being at once the origin of and the reason for the kingly prerogative. As incarnating the spirit of Nyakang it is the king who is considered to be ultimately responsible for the well-being of his country and his people, and it was in order that the spirit might be housed in a thoroughly healthy body that the habitual practice of the Shilluk was to slay their king directly he showed signs of ill-health, or even of such gradual senescence as was evidenced by inability to satisfy his large number of wives. For it was felt that if the divine spirit were to inhabit a

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body that was not fully vigorous this lack of vigour might be communicated to the immanent spirit itself, when with the diminishing vitality of the king the cattle would sicken and fail to bear their increase, the crops would rot in the fields, and men, stricken with disease, would die in ever-increasing numbers. Before discussing the death of the king and the installation of the new ruler it is necessary to point out that the spirit of Nyakang enters the king at his installation ; there is no question of the congenital presence of the divine spirit, nor is the immanence of Nyakang in any strict sense comparable to the *baraka* of the holy men of Islam described in Chapter VI.

According to Shilluk folk-lore there was once a period when any man of the Royal family who could slay the king might reign in his stead, and this is given as the origin of the still existing practice that the king sleeps by day and is awake at night, for it was only at night, when alone or with his women, that his life might have been attempted with hope of success. The Shilluk tell of grim fights around the huts of the royal wives, neither the king nor his assailant calling for assistance, for it was said to be a point of honour for the matter to be settled in single combat. Many Shilluk will give some such account, but it is certain that this was not the practice in recent times, when the leading part in killing the king was taken by members of certain families, called *ororo*, said to be descendants of the third Shilluk king. Perhaps in quite recent times the king was strangled, certainly a few generations ago

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he was walled up in a hut and allowed to perish. Whichever process was adopted there was an interregnum of some months after his death. An effigy of Nyakang was then brought to Fashoda from a shrine at Akurwa near the northern limit of the Shilluk country. The messengers also brought with them a four-legged stool, said to have belonged to Nyakang, and the central act of the installation of the new king was the placing of the effigy of Nyakang upon the stool for a short time, the king seating himself in its place immediately the effigy was withdrawn. It would seem that this part of the ceremony can have no other purpose than the transmission of the spirit of Nyakang to the new king, and this, the only example known in which there is direct evidence of the transmission of the spirit, affords the most interesting testimony to the perspicacity of Frazer, who in the first edition of the *Golden Bough* (published in 1890) pointed out that the ceremony at Nemi, upon which he based his conception of Divine Kings, implied the passage of something which might well be regarded as a divine or semi-divine spirit.

As might be expected, the Shilluk king is responsible for the great rain ceremony at Fashoda, when, through Nyakang, the God in the Firmament is adjured to send rain, and the king's representatives perform this and other important ceremonies in his provincial areas.

The rain-makers of the Dinka—equally divine kings—were not killed until so old that they themselves suggested this course, believing that they were

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no longer fit to advise or lead their people. The rain-maker would then lie on a stretcher, and allow himself to be placed in the grave which had already been prepared for him ; there he would remain for perhaps twenty-four hours, from time to time reciting accounts of his deeds and giving advice to the tribesmen who crowded around. Then, when his strength was failing him and he felt that he had no more to say, he would tell his people to cover him, and he would soon suffocate. It was considered absolutely necessary that this course should be taken ; a Dinka rain-maker when asked whether he would not prefer to die a natural death indignantly repudiated the idea, pointing out that if he were not killed ceremonially his son could not succeed him and the tribe would lack a rain-maker.

South of the Dinka both banks of the Nile are occupied by a number of tribes speaking dialects of the Bari language. The true Bari have commonly been classed as Nilotes, and they do in some respects resemble the Dinka, with whom no doubt their northern sub-tribes, especially the Shir, have mixed to a certain extent. Yet on the whole their kinship is rather with the half-Hamitic tribes of East Africa, and like these they speak an Hamitic language, though they cannot themselves be described as half-Hamites. This is equally true of a group of tribes lying eastwards of the Bari, all speaking dialects of a common language and who from the name of their best known tribe may be called the Lotuko-speaking peoples. Short accounts of both Bari and Lotuko have been given on pages 167-9.

## CHAPTER VIII

### BANTU

THE Bantu are a congeries of peoples, belonging predominantly to Central and Southern Africa, named from and defined by the peculiar type of language that they speak, which is generally considered to have originated in the neighbourhood of the Great Lakes. Apart from the Lacustrians (p. 209) the infusion of Hamitic blood which differentiates them from the true Negro is strongest in the east and south, weakest in the west and north. Thanks to the amount of study that has been given to the Bantu languages it is possible to draw a line representing the Bantu boundary with tolerable accuracy (Fig. 2, pp. 20-1). Though it is less easy to define it in words, an attempt leads to some such result as the following :

Starting in the west from the sea coast at the mouth of the Rio del Rey (separating Southern Nigeria from the Cameroons) the line runs north-east along the boundary, thence south and east with many irregularities to the south-east corner of the Cameroons. From here it passes eastwards across the French and Belgian Congo, south of the Welle River to the head of Lake Albert. It crosses Lake Kioga, passing south of the peak of the Elgon to

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follow the eastern hinterland of Lake Victoria to its south-eastern corner. Thence it passes irregularly across Tanganyika Territory, northwards to the hinterland of Mombassa, whence a long narrow enclave runs north-west to Mt. Kenya, crosses the River Tana and runs northwards to the mouth of the Juba River, including between these two rivers only a narrow coastal zone.

The Bantu, who are defined on purely linguistic criteria, thus occupy the southern two-thirds of black Africa, and the term primarily implies no more than that the tribes included speak languages characterized by a division of nouns into classes distinguished by their prefixes (usually 12-15), absence of grammatical sex-gender, and the existence of alliterative concord, the prefix of each class (noun-class) being repeated in some form or another in all words agreeing with any noun of that class in the sentence. It is the reappearance of the prefix in every word in agreement with the noun that gives the alliterative effect known by this term. Hence the prefixes of any given class or "principiatio" of nouns will reappear with every adjective, verb, or pronoun agreeing with the noun, as may be illustrated by the Zulu sentence :

*Umu-ntu w-e-tu      omu-hle u-ya-bonakala si-m-tanda*  
Man      our      handsome he appears we him love.

*Umu* is the singular prefix of the class to which the word *ntu*, man, belongs, the plural prefix being *ba* (the initial vowel according to Meinhof is a later edition), so that in the plural the sentence just given will run :

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*Aba-ntu b-etu aba-hle ba-ya-bonakala si-ba-tanda*  
People our handsome they appear we them love.

For other details concerning the Bantu languages the reader is referred to Professor Werner's book, mentioned under the heading "Literature," from which the example quoted is taken.

Even more simply the Bantu might be defined as all those "blacks" who use some form of the root *ntu* for human being; with the plural prefix this becomes *ba-ntu* (Bantu) i.e. "the men [of the tribe]," whence the term under which the whole great group has passed into anthropological literature.

But although the Bantu are delimited on linguistic criteria, yet where Bantu and non-Bantu tribes are neighbours it may be found that certain physical qualities are to such a degree characteristic of each linguistic group that within particular areas a terminology based on language also serves to differentiate physical groups. The Cameroons (p. 207) offers an example. Apart, therefore, from its linguistic value the term Bantu when locally applied may come to have a fairly precise physical significance (and this argument applies to a greater or less extent to most of the other great families of Africa with a linguistic terminology).

On a basis primarily of geographical distribution, but taking into account cultural and, to a lesser extent, historical factors, the Bantu may be grouped as follows :

(I) Eastern Bantu, stretching from Uganda in the north, through Kenya Colony, Tanganyika Terri-



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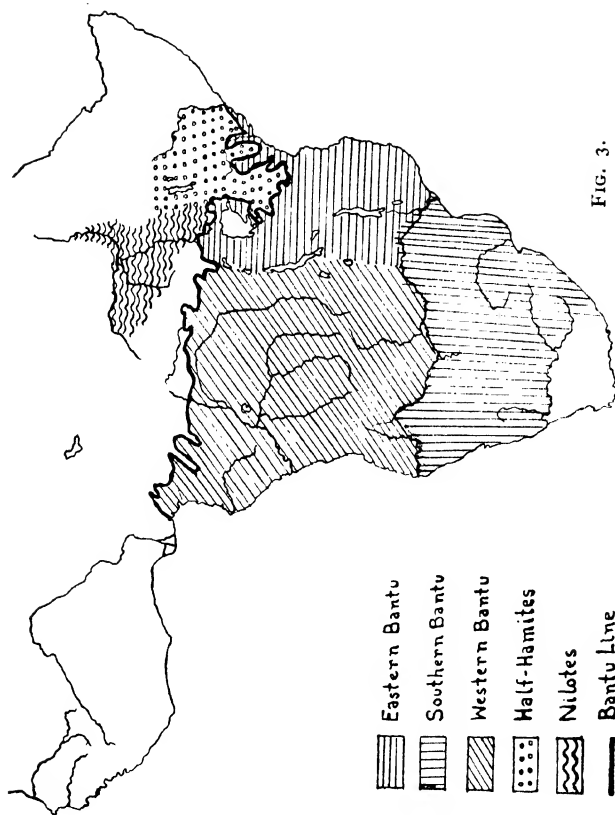


FIG. 3.

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tory, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, and Portuguese East Africa north of the Zambesi.

(II) Southern Bantu, south of the Zambesi and Kunene Rivers ; a vast region including Southern Rhodesia, southern half of Portuguese East Africa, east and central parts of the Union of South Africa, Swaziland and Bechuanaland Protectorates, and South-West Africa.

(III) Western Bantu, from the Atlantic north of the Kunene River to North-West Rhodesia and the Rift Valley (the line of the Great Lakes), and extending in the north-west to French West African possessions and the Southern Cameroons.

It must, however, be realized that this classification, though useful, is so rough as to suffer from over-simplification. The Eastern Bantu fall naturally into three divisions : (a) Northern or Lacustrian, in Uganda and North-West Tanganyika, grouped round Lake Victoria ; (b) North-Eastern, mainly limited to Kenya Colony ; and (c) Eastern, occupying the remainder of the area (I) cited above. The Southern Bantu are composed of four divisions, delimited on p. 183, while the Western Bantu should be regarded as composed of Central and Western divisions.

Of the three main groups of Bantu the Southern and Western are spread over the largest areas and numerically are by far the most important. Yet of the latter we know comparatively little, indeed it is of the Southern and Lacustrian Bantu only that we can be said to have any considerable organized knowledge, and even here this applies only on the

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sociological side, since once more it must be emphasized that physical measurements are almost entirely lacking. Somewhat illogically then we shall begin our account of the Bantu by considering the Southern group ; only after this shall we briefly describe some of the best known tribes of the other groups and allude to such of their cultural features as are particularly interesting.

The Southern Bantu easily outnumber all other groups of the native inhabitants of South Africa and are about four times as numerous as the European population of the country. In the Union of South Africa itself they number nearly six million (1936 estimate), reaching a total of over eight million if the population of Basutoland, Swaziland, Southern Rhodesia, Bechuanaland Protectorate, and South-West Africa be included, with roughly another three-quarters of a million in Portuguese East Africa south of the Zambesi River. These Southern Bantu are divided politically into a very large number of tribal units, each with its own distinctive name but without any general or collective names of their own embracing closely allied peoples. In mode of life, social organization and religious system, all the Southern Bantu show certain broad resemblances, but in details of history, language, and various aspects of culture there are a number of important differences, which permit of their being classified into four main groups :

(IIa) Northern. The Shona peoples of Southern Rhodesia and of Portuguese East Africa immediately

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south of the Zambesi as far as the Sabi River ; include the Barozwi (Banyai), Makorekore, Watawara, Wazezuru, Wabujga, Wamari, Wakaranga, and Vandau.

(II*b*) Eastern. The Zulu-Xosa, chiefly in the coastal region south and east of Drakenberg Mountains, extending from about the Sabi River on the north into Cape Province in the south ; include so-called " Kaffirs " (Amaxosa, Amatembu, Amampondo, Amampondomisi) of the Eastern Province and Native Territories of the Cape ; the Amazulu of Natal and Zululand ; Amaswazi of Swaziland ; Bathonga of Portuguese East Africa. The Amandebele (Matebele) of Matabeleland, Southern Rhodesia, Amashangana (" Shangaans "), Vatua or Abagaza of Portuguese East Africa and Southern Rhodesia, and the various groups of Angoni found north of the Zambesi River in Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, and Tanganyika, are offshoots of the Amazulu and culturally and linguistically must be classed with them.

(II*c*) Central. The Suto-Chwana, occupying the greater portion of the high plateau north of the Orange River and to west and north of the Drakenberg Mountains ; include Bechwana (Barolong, Batlhaping, Bakgatla, Bangwaketse, Bakwena, Bamangwato, Bahurutshe) of Orange Free State, British Bechuanaland, Bechuanaland Protectorate and Transvaal ; Basuto (Basotho) of Basutoland ; Bapedi and Bavenda of Northern Transvaal.

(II*d*) Western. The Herero-Ovambo, in the northern half of South-West Africa and in Southern

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Angola ; include the Ovaherero in central districts of South-West Africa, Ovambu (Ovandonga, Ovakwanyama, etc.) of Ovamboland and Southern Angola, and the Ovimbundu in Benguela and Bailundo districts of Southern Angola, west of the Kwanza River.

As already stated, the classification given on pages 180-2 is based primarily upon considerations of language and culture, both exhibiting appreciable differences as between the groups. Physically, the Southern Bantu also present a great variety of types : all are essentially Negroes, but since they have a varying amount of hamitic blood and have further mixed to a varying extent with Bushmen and other peoples they naturally show a diversity in their physical characters. Yet certain negro characteristics predominate, especially the character of the hair. They are, as a rule, well built, with strong muscular figures, and graceful bearing and gait, especially noticeable in the women, who are accustomed to carry loads on their heads. Tall individuals are often seen, especially among the eastern tribes, but it appears from a series of measurements taken of mine-labourers in Johannesburg that on the average, the Bantu of South Africa are of medium height, nor does there seem to be any noticeable difference in stature between the various tribal groups, as the following figures demonstrate :

|                                  | Ft. | In. |
|----------------------------------|-----|-----|
| East Coast Natives (Bathonga,    |     |     |
| Bachopi, Amashangana) (1337)     | 5   | 6½  |
| “ Kaffirs ” of Cape Colony (630) | 5   | 6¼  |

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|                             | Ft. | In. |
|-----------------------------|-----|-----|
| Natives of Rhodesia, mostly |     |     |
| Mashona (199)               | 5   | 5½  |
| Basuto of Transvaal (521)   | 5   | 6   |
| Basuto of Basutoland (79)   | 5   | 6½  |
| Bechwana (66)               | 5   | 5½  |
| Damara, i.e. Ovaherero (41) | 5   | 6½  |

The whole of the measurements (taken from a MS. by Mr. Turner, deposited with the Royal Anthropological Institute) show that 4,098 South African Bantu of all groups and above the age of 21 years had an average height of about 5 feet 5¼ inches.

In skin colour the range is from the black of the Amaswazi to the yellowish-brown of some of the Bechwana, the latter pointing to a by no means negligible amount of intermixture with Bushmen and Hottentots. The prevalent colour, however, is a dark chocolate, with a reddish ground tint. The hair is uniformly of the ordinary negro type, short and woolly, and typically characterized by numerous often interlocking spirals. The head is generally dolichocephalic; the eyes usually big, black, and prominent; the nose varies—generally low and broad, it sometimes has a well-formed bridge and relatively narrow nostrils. The face is moderately prognathous, the forehead prominent, cheekbones high, lips thick and fleshy. There is, as a rule, little hair on the face, and the beard does not come until the middle twenties. Baldness is rare, but some tribes shave the head periodically.

The negro facial type predominates in all groups, but side by side with it more refined features are

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sometimes seen, especially in the eastern group (*supra* IIb), chiefly in the Zulu and the Thonga sections, where relatively long, narrow faces, thin lips and well-formed noses, strongly reminiscent of the hamitic facial type, occur, and it is said that it is usually these natives who are of more than average height. Among the Zulu this "fine" type is said to constitute about 5 per cent. of the population. Among the Ovaherero (*supra* group II*d*)—not the Ovambo—the hamitic strain may be seen in the long face, long, narrow, straight nose and relatively thin lips, found in many individuals with long and lanky build and angular shoulders. Again, in the lighter-coloured groups of Bechwana the short angular faces of the Bushmen are often met with, usually in individuals of lankier and weaker bodily build. Such divergent characters illustrate to some extent the nature of the physical strains which have modified the original negro blood of the Bantu peoples. Unfortunately, in spite of their overwhelming numerical superiority, it remains a fact that we know far less of the physical anthropology of the Bantu than we do of the other native peoples of South Africa.

Various forms of bodily mutilation are practised. Circumcision, as part of puberty ceremonies, occurs in all the central tribes, in the Xosa section of the eastern group, and in the western tribes. It formerly existed among the other sections of the eastern group (Zulu, Thonga, and Fingo) as well, but seems to have been given up about a century ago, and none of these tribes now practise it, nor is

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it known to have ever occurred in the Mashona tribes. An equivalent operation on girls, the exact details of which are hard to determine, exists apparently only in the central tribes. Mutilations of the teeth, either filing to a point or extraction, are found in the western tribes, in the Thonga section of the eastern group, and in a few of the more northerly and easterly Mashona tribes (group IIa). Cicatrization is widespread, especially in the eastern and northern tribes ; how far it exists as a common practice in the other groups is difficult to determine. Finally may be mentioned the practice of amputating part of one of the fingers, as a rule a terminal joint only. This practice occurs only in the Zulu and Xosa tribes, although it is also found outside the Bantu, among the Bushmen and Hottentots, from whom it has probably been borrowed. Some of these forms of mutilation, especially circumcision and the extraction or filing of the teeth, are connected with puberty ceremonies ; others seem to be merely ornamental.

Politically the Southern Bantu are grouped into a very large number of tribes, a (Bantu) tribe being defined as a community, the members of which form a social and political organization under the government, control, and leadership of a chief, who is the centre of tribal life. Each tribe has its own name, and, as long as it is independent, its own territory.

The Basuto (group IIc), mainly in Basutoland but overlapping into the neighbouring regions, are made up of fractions and remnants of a large number



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of tribes, mostly off-shoots of the Bakwena, and are thus actually of Chwana stock. It is less than a hundred years since these tribes were welded together by the great chief Moshesh to form the Basuto nation, so important a political unit that it is customary to regard it as a distinct section. The Bapedi (an offshoot of the Bakgatla) also attained political importance under their chiefs, Sekwati and Sekukuni, in the middle years of last century, and together with several smaller tribes which they dominated must now be regarded as a distinct section of the Suto-Chwana division.

The inhabitants of Natal and Zululand (group IIb), divided originally into more than a hundred small separate tribes, each with its own name, are all now collectively known as "Zulus," a name derived from one of the tribes which, under the domination of Chaka, i.e. towards the end of the eighteenth century and in the early years of the nineteenth century, absorbed and conquered most of the others and so formed the Zulu nation which played so important a part in the political history of South Africa during the course of last century. Other tribes of this section of historical prominence and importance, still represented in Natal and Zululand, are the Amatetwa, Amangwane, Amabaca, and Amabomvu.

Bearing in mind the history of Chaka and his Zulu it is easy to see that the history of South-Eastern Africa is a tangled skein of secessions, wars, migrations and exterminations, giving rise to new tribal units, such as the Makololo (p. 227).

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Two more important instances are offered by the Matabele and Angoni (IIb). In 1817

“ Umsiligazi, one of the *induna* (headmen) of the great Zulu chief Chaka, revolted and fled north with a large following. These were the Matabele ; they settled first in the Transvaal, but later, owing to the arrival of the Boers, moved further north into that portion of the country known as Matabeleland [overpowering the indigenous Mashona tribes and establishing a military autocracy over them]. . . . The history of the Angoni is similar : they also revolted from Chaka, and after wandering on the Sabi River joined Umsiligazi's band of Matabele about 1830 ; but their chief, Zungandawa, quarrelled with Umsiligazi, and after a battle led his men further north, crossed the Zambesi, and fought his way through to Fipa on Tanganyika. Before this, one of his headmen, Chikusse, had left him and settled to the south of Nyasa. After Zungandawa's death the Angoni gradually split up ; dissension arose among his sons ; powerful *induna* seceded and set up as chiefs on their own account. One branch went north, and succeeded in penetrating as far as the Victoria Nyanza, where they are known as Ruga-Ruga ; others are found to the east of Nyasa, under the name of Maviti, and in Portuguese territory, where they are called Landin [more correctly Vatua or Abagaza]. Other marauding tribes of Zulu origin, more or less connected with the Angoni, are the Mazitu to the north of Nyasa, the Watuta to the north of them, and the Mangwangwara to the east.”

Tribes vary enormously in size, some having from a few hundred to at the most a couple of thousand members, as in the case of most of the Thonga, Shona and Transvaal Chwana tribes, while others are much larger, e.g. in the Chwana section (IIc) the Bakwena of the Bakwena Reserve number about

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26,500, the Batawana 42,000, and the Bamangwato 100,000; of the Ovambo tribes (II*d*) the Ovandonga have 65,000 and the Ovakwanyama 55,000 members, the Amaswazi, again, number 140,000, while the Basuto of Basutoland (II*c*), who are by far the largest of all and might more fairly be called a nation, number over half a million.

The members of the eastern, northern, and western groups usually live in small settlements, which are scattered irregularly over the country at some little distance apart. Each of these settlements, or kraals, as they are commonly called in South Africa, is inhabited by the members of a single domestic or household group, so that in these tribes the household group is also the local group. In the central tribes, on the other hand, the people tend to collect together in villages or towns embracing a number of different household groups. In Basutoland these villages are numerous and generally fairly small, containing from five to fifty households. In Bechuanaland the people of each tribe live in an irregular aggregation of numerous household groups, clustering closely together and constituting a large town often of considerable size. Thus Serowe, the chief town of the Bamangwato, has a population of 25,000, and Molepopole (Bakwena), 12,500.

But every household, whether it be a distinct local unit or merely part of a larger village or town, is clearly marked off from the rest, and in all the tribes the household groups are all arranged on the same definite plan. The central feature is the

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cattle-fold, a circular enclosure which is fenced in strongly and in which the cattle, sheep and goats are kept at night. Around this at a regular interval apart are ranged the huts of the various members of the household. Among the Ovaherero and all the eastern tribes with the exception of the Thonga section these huts are of beehive shape; in all the other tribes (Ovambo, central group, northern group, and 'Thonga) they are round, with conical roofs. Each hut generally has its own small private yard where the cooking is done; there is also either a tree, a forked stick, some stones, or some other special spot which serves as an ancestral altar. The forked stick may be in a hut, at the entrance of the chief hut, or at the main gateway of the kraal itself. There is generally a common open space, and usually an enclosure reserved for the men, while the whole kraal may be surrounded by a circular, oval, or horse-shoe shaped enclosure or fence, made in a variety of ways.

Among the eastern, northern, and central groups of the Southern Bantu the clans are organized on a patrilineal basis; in the western tribes, on the other hand, the Ovambo clans are matrilineal, while the Ovaherero have a double system of organization by which everyone belongs to two units, one with patrilineal the other with matrilineal descent, both so resembling a clan in general structure that if either existed alone it would be called by this name.

In all the eastern tribes the persons belonging to a clan bear a common *isibongo*, a word which may be translated "praise name" or "ancestral name"

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and is used for the name of the group. All members of an *isibongo* claim descent from a common ancestor in the male line, and the *isibongo* is usually the name of this ancestor. Thus a group whose *isibongo* is Tshezi all claim to be direct descendants in the male line from Tshezi, and are collectively known as amaTshezi; and a member of this group will often be addressed as "Tshezi." The *isibongo* of such a group is used as an honorific to or of the members of the group; it is a compliment or form of politeness to address a man not by his personal name but by his *isibongo* name, and under certain circumstances no other form of address is permissible.

A common *isibongo* imposes various obligations and rights upon the persons thus connected; in the first place, people with the same *isibongo* may not intermarry, i.e. marriage is permitted only between persons with different *isibongo*. Again, people may drink milk only with people bearing the same *isibongo* as themselves. Among the Amazulu and the Amampondo, to drink milk with a member of another clan is tantamount to pledging blood-brotherhood with that clan, and would prevent a man from marrying a woman of that clan. There are further special taboos in some of the sections of this group, especially the Zulu, pertaining to each *isibongo*. Our knowledge of these taboos is somewhat inadequate. Although no marriage is possible between members of the same clan, a clan will often break up, a younger branch becoming a new clan and taking some more immediate ancestor as

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its *isibongo*, when intermarriage between the two groups can take place.

The central tribes are also divided into groups, the members of which have a common name, the *seboko*, serving as cognomen and as a ceremonial and laudatory form of address. The *seboko* is not the name of a common ancestor but—and this holds also for the northern tribes—is that of an animal or some mineral, such as iron, or some natural phenomenon, such as rain. It appears also that there were formerly various taboos and observances, ritual songs and dances, in connection with the species of animal or object whose name is the *seboko* of a group.

For their subsistence the Southern Bantu depend principally upon pastoralism and hoe-culture. They keep cattle, sheep and goats, which supply them with much of their food, in the form of milk, which is drunk sour, and with the raw material, in the form of skins, for some of their industries. The cattle are rarely killed for food save upon ceremonial occasions, meat being obtained chiefly by hunting. In addition crops are cultivated by all the tribe with the exception of the Ovaherero. The crops raised are chiefly millet and maize, supplemented by vegetables such as pumpkins, peas, and beans. The cattle are herded and milked by the men, while the care of the fields is in the hands of the women, who are prohibited by religious sanction from having anything to do with the cattle. Only among the Ovaherero do we find that the women do the milking, and in this they are excep-

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tional not only among the Bantu tribes but among Negro-Hamitic peoples generally.

Ancestor-worship forms the basis of the religious life of the Bantu. It is primarily a family cult, and is everywhere patrilineal—a man worships his own ancestors in the male line, and these are the only relatives whom he can ever approach. The head of the family conducts the worship, and, whatever its origin, the most obvious function of ancestor-worship is to maintain the social bond of the family and to keep the other members of the family subordinate to the head, who alone has the power to intercede with the dead, e.g. among the Bathonga when two brothers have quarrelled, the younger will perform a special sacrifice of reconciliation with the elder in order that the latter may once more intercede on his behalf with the ancestral spirits. The only exception to the domestic nature of the cult is that the ancestors of the chief are the source of strength for the whole tribe, for just as the chief and his family guide the fortunes of the living, so his ancestors care for the whole people of their ruling descendant. Only members of the chief's family, however, can approach them on behalf of the tribe as a whole, and thus it is that among the Bantu religion provides a powerful sanction for the chieftainship.

When a man dies there is a long series of ritual acts to be carried out before the dead man is finally "brought back home" as an ancestor. Following on the various rites of mourning there comes after from three to nine months or so the "bringing

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home," as the Amazulu put it, of the *itongo* or spirit, in essence the ceremony consisting of the first sacrifice to the dead man (as an ancestor). Previous to this he has made known his presence either in the form of a snake or lizard basking in the sun near the grave or visiting the cattle kraal or the huts, or he has appeared to his relatives in a dream. Should he have done none of these things foul play is suspected and a magician is summoned to call him home.

Day in, day out, the ancestors take part in the lives of the people. No beer-drinking is held, but they receive their libation; no feast is held, but they receive their portion. But there are certain occasions in the life of the family and of the tribe when the ancestors must be specially assembled and propitiated, and these are the occasions of sacrifice.

Connected with ancestor-worship is the sacred fire which is found in the western tribes. Among the Ovaherero each family group has its own kraal. On the eastern side of the kraal is the hut of the chief wife of the headman, and in front of this is the altar, *okuruo*, on which burns perpetually the sacred fire of the ancestors. This fire is guarded day and night by the chief wife of the headman or by her daughters. At night it is taken into the hut, and each morning it is carried out again to the altar. There, by the fire, the oxen are killed for sacrificial feasts, and their skulls lie around it and are used as seats for the men of the kraal, while near by is the small *umumborombonga* tree, i.e. the sacred fig tree, or a dry branch of the *omuvapu*



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("roseintje") bush, which can be used if no fig-tree can be made to grow. The fig-tree is the symbol of the ancestors, and in the north of the Herero country there is a great fig-tree which is thought of as the seat of all the ancestors, and so is regarded as most sacred.

Besides the ancestral spirits the Southern Bantu also believe in a universal deity who never was human. While the conception of this universal spirit differs from people to people there is little doubt that most of the tribes think of it more as a power manifesting itself in natural phenomena than as a god, though personal attributes are often given to it. This power shows itself most impressively in the phenomena of the weather; rain, thunder, lightning, are all considered as its manifestations. Among the Bathonga there is a very impersonal conception of this power, and Tilo, "Heaven," is thought of as presiding over all unaccountable and inevitable phenomena of the atmosphere, of the fields, and of human existence. Sometimes Tilo is addressed as Hosi, "Lord." Here as it seems is a power scarcely personal, which is partly creative, partly a personification of the weather, partly a great power working in the universe.

Among the Amazulu these conceptions have crystallized, and we find a Creator God, Unkulunkulu, "the great, great one," and a Weather God, Inkosi, "chief," who resembles in many respects Tilo of the Thonga. According to the Zulu legends, mankind came out of a bed of reeds (Nthlanga). Now Unkulunkulu is said to be he who "broke

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off the nations " from Nthlanga ; he is thus the creator of man, and he also made the sun and moon, etc. As the Amazulu put it, " all things were made by the first man Unkulunkulu, they were made by him." At the same time he is the great, great ancestor of the people, but his " house " is not represented on earth to-day—he is prior to all peoples. Yet although Unkulunkulu had far greater powers than the ancestors of living men he is not to be compared with the Hebrew or Christian conception of the Creator. He is the great, wonderful, first man, but he is not worshipped, for he has no intimate representatives on earth. Inkosi (iZulu), on the other hand, is in the firmament, and he it is who brings all the storms and natural happenings. Certain men are beloved of iZulu or Inkosi—they can control Heaven provided they lead a life of strict ritual purity, and Heaven, too, will revenge any harm to them. Similar conceptions are apparently held of Modimo by the central tribes, and of Kalunga (Ovambo) or Ndjambi Karunga (Ovaherero) by the Namaqualand tribes of the Western Bantu.

Politically the area of the Western Bantu (p. 184-5) comprehends the Cameroons (French), Rio Muni (Spanish), the Gaboon (French), French Equatoria, the Congo (Belgian), Angola (Portuguese), and Rhodesia, with a fraction of Portuguese East Africa north of the Zambesi. In this vast area lies the true " Heart of Africa," the tropical rain forest of the Congo, the home of such little-known beasts

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as the okapi, and of pygmy hunting tribes of habits and beliefs concerning which we are almost entirely ignorant, but it equally includes, or included, the territory of considerable and highly organized kingdoms, such as the mediæval kingdoms of the Kongo and the Balunda, and in later times the Bushongo Empire. Johnston, in his great work on the Bantu languages, enumerated over 150 tribes in this area speaking Bantu or semi-Bantu tongues. Here it is possible to do no more than refer to a few groupings of special importance or historical interest.

Ethnically the northern fringe of the Southern Bantu merges gradually into the central tribes of the Western Bantu, as in the case of the Barotse, whose Aluyi section is under the domination of southern overlords. The Bajokwe (Kioko) of Angola and the Congo have also some southern affinities, while the Baila are immigrant Eastern Bantu mixed with a considerable Wemba element. To the north of these and kindred tribes we find the solid mass of Luba-Wemba tribes, extending, roughly speaking, between Tanganyika and Nyasa in the east to the Kasai in the west. To these belong the Bashilange, Babemba (Awemba), Babisa, Banalulua, Basonge and Barua, the latter being a territorial designation for Baluba-Hemba. To the north of the Sankuru River and part of the Kasai is the medley of tribes called Basongo-Meno, which is transitional between the Luba-Wemba group and such tribes as the Bate-tela and Bankutu who dwell north of the 4th parallel of southern latitude. East of the Loango River is the domain of the Bakongo-Bashilele-Bushongo

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congeries, specially known for their skill in wood-carving. As already stated, the southern limit of the Western Bantu is vague; the formation of the Lunda Empire, the Jaga raids, and the subsequent encroachments of the Bajokwe (Kioko) have played havoc with tribal organization. The Bateke (Anziques, Angica, and many variants) occupy a vast region on the right bank of the Congo north of Stanley Pool, extending far inland; further north the Gaboon as far as the upper reaches of the Ogowe is now largely peopled by the Pangwe (Fang, p. 207), who have led a roving existence and in their various expeditions and temporary conquests have left their indelible mark on most tribes north of the Ogowe, among whom racial purity scarcely exists until in the Cameroons we reach the northern limit of the Bantu and "Sudanic" influences make themselves felt.

Of the old kingdom of the Kongo we get some idea from the early explorers. When in 1484 at the instance of Prince Henry the navigator Diego Çao discovered the Congo, the chiefs, from the sea to the River Kwango, from the Cuanza to the Kwilu, were under the jurisdiction of one king. Knivet's narrative preserves for us a record of the state maintained by the sovereign at the end of the sixteenth century.

"The King of Congo," he wrote, "when hee goeth to the Campe to see his Armie, rideth upon an Elephant in great pompe and majestie, on either side of the Elephant he hath six slaves two of them were Kings, that he himselfe had taken in the field; all the rest were of noble

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birth ; some of them were brothers to the King of Ancica [the land of the Bateke near Stanley Pool] and some of them were of the chiefest blood of the great King of Bengala [Imbangala, another name for, or a branch of, the Jaga]. . . . Then there followeth a More, which doth nothing but talke aloud in praise of the King, telling what a great Warriour he hath beene, and praising his wisdome for all things that hee hath accomplished. . . .”

Allowing for exaggeration in the early accounts—and we may question the accuracy of Knivet’s statement that the elephant had been domesticated—it is certain that there was once a great and important kingdom of the Kongo. Moreover, other empires, such as those of the Lunda, arose, had their day, and disappeared, so that in this area there is a practical contrast to the relatively permanent kingdoms of the Guinea Coast. In the light of our present knowledge we have no warrant for saying that this is due to the infusion of hamitic blood, rather may we look to the influence of environment and in the case of the kingdom of the Kongo the early and vehement introduction of Christianity. The population—as it seems—was largely composed of peoples living in independent, unconsolidated and usually small groups, subject to no central government. For a time the superior military strength of migrant tribes permitted a political control to be established, but always environment and perhaps a definite repugnance to this form of government resulted in a more or less rapid disintegration. Often the origin of a state is to be traced to a stranger of outstanding ability ; thus the Lunda Empire traditionally originates in a Baluba

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hunter from the north-east, who with a band of followers settled among the far more numerous Balunda whose home is the highlands constituting Eastern Angola and the south-west portion of the Congo. This empire, which flourished in the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century, extended from the River Kwango to the Lualaba, and is not only interesting from the point of view of history but important even nowadays as accounting for the present-day distribution of territory. The son of the founder of the Lunda Empire (by a Lunda woman of chiefly rank) was named Yanvo, and Muata Yanvo became the hereditary title of the Lunda emperors. These continually added to their power by sending out relatives to form tributary kingdoms, and in this manner arose the states of Kazembe on the east and of Mai Munene on the north. Another kingdom, that of Kasongo, further north on the River Lualaba, was also an offshoot of the Lunda Empire, whose parent stock, the Baluba, divided into a large number of tribes, have spread across the continent as far as the Kasai, being themselves known in the east as the Bashilange. The Basonge are an important section of the Baluba, north of whom are the Batetela. In the Kasai region are a particularly important people, the Bakuba, calling themselves and commonly known as Bushongo, "the people of the throwing-knife," and divided into a number of sub-tribes of whom the Bambala are the most important. These people originally came from the far north, from the neighbourhood of the Ubangi and Shari Rivers, and are

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particularly interesting as the founders of an empire which reached its zenith about the time of the foundation of the Lunda Empire and was still important when they were studied by Mr. Torday a few years ago. Moreover we may reasonably regard their politico-social organization as to some extent reflecting that of the old kingdom of the Kongo.

As the result of these and other invasions the Bantu of the Congo can be regarded as forming two groups, a western and a southern, the peoples of the Lower Congo and the Lower Kasai constituting the first group, while those of the Upper Kasai and Sankuru and of Katanga belong to the second. This division corresponds roughly to the northern boundary of the territory occupied by the Balunda, the Baluba, and their kindred tribes.

As to the physical characters of the Bantu of the Congo it is obvious that in so huge an area there must be variation. Generally speaking, the head is long, the nose broad and often flat, there is usually considerable prognathism, and the lips are thick ; as usual among Negroids the legs are thin. Yet among such tribes as the Batetela there is a definitely round-headed element. Again, almost everywhere individuals are described of a type less frankly Negro than their fellows ; such have thinner lips, higher and less broad nose, more hair on the face, and often a lighter skin colour, but since both types are said to occur in the same tribe and even in the same village no classificatory value can be attached to them in the present stage of our knowledge.

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The following measurements add some degree of precision to these very general statements: The Fiote or Fjort of the Lower Congo, i.e. of the area which was the cultural centre of the old kingdom of the Kongo, are dolichocephalic with an average stature of about 66 inches. The Bakongo, to the south of the river in the cataract region extending to Stanley Pool, have a cephalic index of 74 and a stature of 65 inches. The Bangala, about the bend of the middle river, are rather more dolichocephalic and slightly taller. The Basoko of the Congo-Aruwimi confluence are shorter, averaging 63½ inches, and verge upon and perhaps reach brachycephaly, with a cephalic index of slightly over 80. All these tribes are of the Congo proper. Coming to its tributaries, the Baluba of the Kasai and Sankuru Rivers are high mesaticephals, almost attaining to brachycephaly, with a stature of 66½ inches and 65½ inches respectively; the Batetela of the Lubefu give an average cephalic index of 78 on the skull, equivalent to one of about 80 on the living, the five highest measurements giving figures from 81 to 84, while of the whole series 9 out of 50 (male) and 2 out of 27 (female) give an index of 80 or over.

Socially the highest development of the Western Bantu is found among the Bushongo (between the Sankuru and Lulua Rivers) who have a highly organized system of government, consisting of a hierarchy of ministers presided over by the king (*nyimi*). The ministry is composed of the prime minister (*kimi kambu*), the minister of war (*nyibita*),



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the four representatives of the provinces into which the kingdom is divided, and two women, daughters of former kings. One of these women is the more important, and in times of peace wears a bowstring round her neck which, on the outbreak of war, she hands solemnly to the *nyibita*, the final decision of war or peace resting with her. Below these dignitaries come descending grades of innumerable court officials, and representatives of trades, guilds, and sub-tribes (including pygmies). An important person is the official historian, who must be the son of a king and takes precedence over the other princes, his duty being the preservation of ancient legend and history. At the meetings of the Great Council the king sits on a dais surrounded by his six male and two female ministers, and next to him, on a higher seat, is his mother, whose position is considered even more exalted than that of the king. Many of the officials have judicial functions, and in addition there are twelve judges. In theory it is the king who nominates his councillors, but in reality he has little say in the matter; a guild will itself decide on its representative, and in all other appointments public opinion carries the day, sometimes in opposition to the expressed wishes of the king.

The temporal power of the king is indeed strictly limited, and to such sub-tribes as the Bangongo and the Bangendi he is merely the political chief of the country. To his own people the Bambala, however, he is not only their temporal but also their spiritual chief, the living link joining them, through

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his predecessors, to Bumba the founder, and as such he is indeed Chembe Kunji, "God on Earth." In each king is incarnated the spirit of Bumba, who makes the sun shine, who sends the rain to refresh the earth after a drought, and is responsible for the fertility of all living things. Any insult to the king is an insult to the whole clan, and any weakening of his power a danger to the community; in fact, among his own people his position is comparable with that of the Shilluk king (pp. 173-6). Formerly he was never allowed to touch the ground, but was carried on men's shoulders, and when he sat down it was on the back of a slave.

The lineage of the king is traced through one hundred and twenty predecessors, and part of the coronation ceremony is the recitation by the king-elect of all these ancestral names. The earlier are naturally mythological rather than historical, but one of these rulers, Shamba Bolongongo—the national hero of the Bushongo, to whom every possible wonder is attributed and whose sayings are continuously quoted—seems to have been a really remarkable person. He reorganized the system of government, encouraged the arts and crafts, and sought to abolish war by forbidding the use of the bow and arrow and of the *shongo* (throwing-knife), until then the national weapon of the Bushongo, while to his reign is attributed the importation of tobacco, the invention of the use of palm-oil, the introduction of the art of embroidery—at which the Bushongo now excel all other African peoples—and the growing of cassava.

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The north-western limit of the Bantu is reached in the Cameroons, where (besides the Pygmy) we have to deal with the Sudanic-speaking Negro. In general the Bantu occupy the forest belt and the Sudanic Negroes the grassland and mountain areas, but mention should be made of a number of tribes along the line of junction, said to present especially mixed racial characters and commonly described as speaking languages called semi-Bantu.

There does not seem to be any general difference in the physical characters of the Bantu- and the Sudanic-speaking tribes of the Cameroons. Their stature is about the same, while to the presence of Pygmies (roundheads) in this area may presumably be ascribed the general tendency to brachycephaly. What difference there is in head-form is more fairly expressed in percentages than in averages in this very mixed area, or, in general terms, while both groups are predominantly mesaticephalic the Bantu group tends to dolichocephaly and the Sudanic to brachycephaly.

The Bantu-speaking Pangwe (not to be confused with the Mpongwe, a settled Bantu people of the Gaboon), Oshyeba, etc., a group of tribes collectively known as Fang, appear to have originated somewhere west of the Congo-Nile divide and to have raided across Africa to the west coast. They are now the most important people of the Gaboon, occupying most of the country between the southern boundary of Spanish Guinea and the Ogowe River. They have attained considerable celebrity as cannibals, and it was of them—no doubt

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with some exaggeration—that Mary Kingsley wrote :

“ He does it [cannibalism] in his common-sense way. He will eat his next-door neighbour's relations and sell his own deceased to his next-door neighbour in return ; but he does not buy slaves and fatten them up . . . as some of the Middle Congo tribes do. . . . He has no slaves, no prisoners of war, no cemeteries.”

Physically the Fang are moderately tall men, with an average stature of  $66\frac{1}{2}$  inches. They are high mesaticephals, if not actually brachycephalic, and when first mentioned by Bowdich more than 100 years ago were described by him as an inland people with such relatively refined features that he considered them allied to the Fulani, i.e. we should now recognize in them a pronounced hamitic strain. No doubt miscegenation has gone on at an increased rate during the last century, but even at the present time they are described as well-built, tall and slim, with a brown complexion, often inclining to yellow, well-developed beard, and a projecting forehead. Part of their reputation for ferocity may, perhaps, be attributed to their systematic filing of their incisors, and sometimes their canine teeth, to a point.

## CHAPTER IX

### BANTU (*continued*)

OF the Eastern Bantu (delimited on p. 180) the tribes—they might almost be called nations—grouped round the shores of Lake Victoria and Lake Albert possess so many characters in common that they are well brought together under the single term Lacustrians (Group Ia, p. 182). For a considerable time, perhaps some hundreds of years, they have existed as a number of kingdoms, the best known being Baganda, Banyoro, and Karagwe, but their history indicates that at one time they all formed part of a greater unit, the Kitwara Empire. Other “Lacustrian” tribes are the Waruanda, east of Lake Kivu; Warundi, north of Lake Tanganyika; Wasukuma, in Usukuma, south of Lake Victoria; and Wanyamwezi, in Unyamwezi, east of Lake Tanganyika. It seems that all these tribes have a hamitic (presumably Galla) element, brought in by the Bahima, far more recent than those incoming waves of hamitic blood which mixing with the Negro originally gave rise to the Bantu.

To return to the Kitwara Empire. As is but natural each of its peoples tells the story to its own glorification, but all are agreed that their common founder and first ruler, Kintu, came from the

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north bringing with him a single cow, goat, chicken, banana root and sweet potato, which, increasing miraculously, soon stocked the country, the potato being especially apportioned to Banyoro and the banana to Uganda. Presently Kintu became weary of his people's stupidities and bloodsheddings and disappeared, but since it was known that he did not die it became traditional for his successors to seek for him. At last he was found by a king, Ma'anda, as an aged man seated on a throne in the forest, his beard white with age and his followers white-skinned as the white man and clothed in white robes. The story tells how Ma'anda committed an act of bloodshed, whereupon Kintu and his followers vanished and have been seen no more. Here is a fairly definite account indicating the advent from the north of a "white," i.e. hamitic aristocracy, and one with less mythical elaboration has been recorded by Emin Pasha. No doubt it is at least in part due to this Caucasian influence that we find the curious mixture of primitive and advanced elements in the social institutions of the Lacustrian communities. Thus, among the Baganda we have, on the one hand, the horrible slaughter that occurred after the death of a king, on the other the advanced organization of the state, with, at its head, the king (*kabaka*), with his *lukiko* or council, of which the chief members were the *katikiro* (prime minister and chief justice), the *kimbugwe*, who had charge of the king's umbilical cord, and a high chief from each of the main districts into which the country was divided. Each chief

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accounted for his people to the *katikiro* and thus through him to the king.

Among the Banyoro (more correctly the Bakitara) the invaders from the north have fused less completely with the older inhabitants than in the case of the Baganda, so that two classes remained distinct in the body politic—the pastoral Bahima, and the Bahera, the original agriculturists and artisans, whom the Bahima regard more or less as serfs. Later there arose a third group—now apparently constituting the mass of the Banyoro—originating among the Bahera and so far accepted by the pastoral class that they were allowed to intermarry with the daughters of the latter. It has been pointed out that the totemic system reflects this triple organization, since three classes of totems can be recognized, namely, those relating to cattle alone, others connected with both cattle and plants, and a third class with plants only. It is, however, probable that this scheme presents a somewhat artificial simplification of the problem.

Among the Banyankole assimilation between the two stocks has not gone nearly so far as among the Baganda or even the Banyoro (v. pp. 156–7). It might indeed be said that assimilation has scarcely gone beyond the possession of a common language spoken both by the intruding Bahima and the indigenous Bahera. The Bahima are cow people, owning large herds if they are rich, or acting as herdsmen if they are poor; the Bahera, on the other hand, were rarely allowed to possess cattle and had to provide grain and beer for the Bahima.

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Physically the Baganda are described as showing a wide range of variation. This probably applies especially to skin colour, type of nose and thickness of lips, all characters that would readily vary according to the amount of hamitic and negro blood in the clan or family, for with regard to stature and headform the statement is hardly borne out by the considerable number of measurements published. The Baganda may be taken to be rather stoutly-built men of medium height, averaging about  $65\frac{1}{2}$  inches, with a cephalic index said to vary from 72 to 75 according to clan, but no doubt with an average at or a little above 73. On the psychological side they differ considerably from their neighbours; their extreme politeness has always been proverbial, and they are, as a rule, far neater in their dress and generally show a certain cleanliness in their surroundings which is, for the most part, lacking in the neighbouring tribes. The men have a scrupulous regard for decency, carried to such an extent that in the time of King Mutesa a heavy fine was inflicted on courtiers who exposed their legs to view in the king's presence. Moreover, they have shown a desire for education and a readiness to adopt the white man's civilization and religion which, whether this be regarded as a virtue or not, at least sets them apart from their neighbours. The house of the better-class Baganda is very superior to the ordinary African hut; the lofty high-pitched roof is supported by slender columns of palm and covered with a thick thatch neatly shaved to a smooth edge, while the appearance of



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the interior of the hut as well as the porch and verandah is enhanced by a canework of elephant grass, a speciality of the Baganda.

Among the Lacustrians the royal residence, it might almost be called palace, constitutes a large and elaborate series of buildings within an enclosure and includes those housing the sacred royal drums, to which, at least among the Banyankole, offerings of beer and milk are made. All these people maintain a sacred herd, set aside for the use of the king, the milk of which he drinks with the utmost ceremony. In Uganda the cult of the numerous deities was under the immediate control of the king, while the ghosts of kings were placed on an equality with the gods and received the same honour and worship. The death of a king was formerly accompanied by much bloodshed, a Banyoro king being buried in a grave lined with the living bodies of his wives and retainers, whose arms and legs had previously been broken to prevent their escape. The death of a Baganda king was announced by the extinction of the sacred fire which burned near the entrance of the royal enclosure and the strangling of the chief who had charge of it. The king's body, after special treatment, was buried with many victims; five months later the jawbone was taken from the skull and placed besides the umbilical cord (carefully preserved during lifetime) in a temple specially built for it, where it was thenceforth guarded by the ex-queen. Among the Banyankole a commoner is buried in the dung-heap, but the body of a king is taken to the royal burial-place in the Ensanzi forest,

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where some days later the priest of the temple produces a lion cub and presents it to the people as the spirit of the dead king. The king's body is then buried with little ceremony, and the cub is carefully reared, being later released to join its fellows, believed to be spirits of former kings, and therefore sacred, though lions in other parts of the kingdom may be killed with impunity.

Apart from the Lacustrians the Eastern Bantu fall into two great divisions, a north-eastern and a true eastern (p. 182).

The north-eastern tribes (group Ib) of the Eastern Bantu include the Wapokomo of Tana River Valley, the Wanyika, the Akamba between Tana River and Mt. Kilimanjaro, the Akikuyu round Mt. Kenya, the Wataita in the Taita hills, and the Wachagga on the southern slopes of Kilimanjaro. Of these tribes the Akamba and Akikuyu are probably the most important ; they are certainly the best known, and like the remainder of the group have been considerably affected in culture by the Masai and other half-hamitic peoples.

South of these tribes the remaining—true Eastern Bantu—group (Ic) fall into two great sub-groups, viz. (1) East Coast Bantu, in Tanganyika and Portuguese East Africa, and (2) East Central or Nyasa Bantu in Northern Rhodesia and round Lake Nyasa. The former includes the Wasambara and Wasagara of North-east Tanganyika ; the Wasango (Warori), Wagogo and Wahehe of Central and Southern

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Tanganyika ; the coastal Swahili ; the Makonde, between the Rufiji and Rovuma Rivers ; and the Wamakua, south of the Rovuma River to the northern half of the Zambesi delta. The East-Central section includes the Awankonde, north and north-east of Lake Nyasa as far as the shores of Lake Rukwa ; the Wafipa, on the southern shores of Lake Tanganyika ; the Anyanja (including Asenga, Asena, Achewa), south and south-west of Lake Nyasa down to the Zambesi River ; and the Wayao (Ajawa) between the Rovuma and Lujenda Rivers east of Lake Nyasa, who link up again with the Wamakua. It is worth noting that a number of these tribes belong in great part to the earlier Bantu migrations, and that reflex movements northward had produced disorder long before Arab raids and Zulu (Angoni) incursions spread ruin and desolation.

The Wanyika (*supra*, *Ib*), so called from the Swahili word meaning "forest and thorn bush country," are a group of tribes who, during the sixteenth century, under pressure from the Galla, migrated down the coast from the poor country on the left bank of the Tana River. The term is not however used indiscriminately, and does not include such peoples as the Wapokomo, though they are ethnically connected with the tribes to whom it is applied. The Giryama, now living about 3° south of the Equator, are probably the most important of the group, whose members are, generally speaking, tall, muscular, well set up, and

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broad-headed. Waist-cloths are worn by the men, and women wear many-pleated kilts, but are nude from the waist up, though now the tendency is to dress like Swahili women.

The Nyika tribes are divided into exogamous clans which observe certain prohibitions and avoidances and share a general veneration for the hyena, in which all the cognate tribes join except the Pokomo. Every clan has its own club-house, and there is also a council-house, which is the general inter-clan meeting place for men, and houses the friction drum used for convening the council. They are essentially agricultural, with many sheep and goats but few cattle. Some, if not all the tribes, carry swords, which are, however, as much implements as weapons, while the Giryama have a parrying stick, said to be unique in this area.

The Wanyika worship the widespread Eastern Bantu deity, Mulungu, who, in one aspect at least, is the Dispenser and Creator from whose union with the earth have sprung all things in the world, including human beings, who are the hens and chickens of Mulungu.

The Akamba, one of the largest tribes in British East Africa, occupy part of the eastern slope of the East African highlands between the upper course of the River Tana and the Uganda Railway. Their neighbours in the west and north-west are the Akikuyu, and to the south are the half-hamitic Masai, their inveterate enemies. The Akamba are high dolichocephals, with an average stature of about 65 inches. They are divided into a number

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of totemic clans, most of which seem to be named after the ancestor, but may also be referred to by the name of the totem. As so often happens the members of a clan are supposed to possess the characteristics of the totem animal ; thus the members of the lion clan are courageous and spirited, those of the hyena clan characterized by perpetual greed. Properly speaking, there are no chiefs ; government is in the hands of a council of elders, of a purely local character and with no authority for the whole country, though occasionally a rich man with a commanding personality has attained to the leadership of an extensive territory. The council has judicial and religious functions, decides questions of war (i.e. raids) and its members officiate at sacrifices ; for warfare temporary leaders were selected.

The Akamba have age-grades, and within them rank-classes. The position of a man within his grade is marked by the part that he may eat of the goats paid as fees to the grade. Except for the grades carrying the privilege of sitting on the council, a dignity usually reached between the ages of 40 and 50, a man may belong to any grade on payment of the proper fees.

The medicine man's functions include prophecy, divination, and the curing of sickness, and he is consulted on all the perplexing occasions of life. With the elders he is guardian of the ancestral cult, and he tells the elders when to sacrifice to the spirits and gives instructions for carrying out the rites.

Formerly the Kamba men went naked, but nowa-

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days European blankets are worn by both sexes. Cicatrization is practised, mostly by the women, and both sexes chip a number of the front teeth of the upper jaw into points, in addition to removing two lower incisors ; as a result of this custom the teeth tend to break off above the gum, when " false " teeth made of the bone of goat or hartebeest may be pegged into the roots. The bow and poisoned arrow is the usual weapon, and a dagger ; they have never used spears and shields.

The Akamba are chiefly agriculturalists ; the cultivation is carried on almost exclusively by the women, with hoe and digging-stick ; and no instruments of iron are permitted lest the rain should no longer fall. Cattle, sheep and goats are kept, and though the cattle are herded by boys and men the milking is done by women. Like the Masai and Kikuyu, the Akamba occasionally bleed their cattle, blood being a favourite food ; a ligature is fastened tightly round the animal's neck, causing a swelling of the great vein, at which a stopped arrow is shot, and the blood is caught in a calabash and drunk or made into soup with milk or millet flour.

The Creator and Supreme Being, Mulungu, dwells in the sky and is seldom worshipped. " Mulungu does us no evil, so wherefore should we sacrifice to him ? " is the characteristic attitude, but in every Kamba family offerings are made to the ancestral spirits at every meal, in addition to the public cult superintended by the elders.

In some districts the dead are not buried, but are dragged out into the bush and left for the

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hyenas. After a death no one may have sexual intercourse until the village has been purified; the elder performing the rite sacrifices a goat and sprinkles the stomach contents over the assembled mourners and on the walls and the bed in the hut where the death took place. Before the process of purification is completed the widow must sleep with the dead man's brother or successor as her husband; if there are several widows only the "big" wife need undergo this ceremony.

The Akikuyu inhabit the highlands of Kenya, where they say that they superseded a race of hunters (perhaps the predecessors of the present Dorobo) and a diminutive race known as the Agumba, now extinct. The Akikuyu attribute their own origin to the Akamba, their neighbours to the south-east—with closely similar language and customs—from whom they differ little in physique (C.I. 76, stature about  $64\frac{1}{2}$  inches).

The Akikuyu are divided into exogamous patrilineal clans, connected by blood ties, but not restricted to any particular area. Some clans have a recognized headman, others have not, but each has its hereditary taboos and traditions; thus the Agachiku clan must not work iron or act as circumcisors, and the males of the M'wesaga clan are able to see rain coming and to stop it. A man's rank in the tribe depends on his relation to the rising generation, and the first step is reached when he becomes the father of a second child and enters the class of the *moranje*; when his first child is old enough for initiation into the tribe the father

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reaches the second official rank, that of *kiama*, and becomes a member of the old men or governing class, with a wand of office and a particular type of ear-ring.

The Kikuyu country is extremely fertile and the people are essentially agriculturists, the country—for the most part denuded of trees—carrying big plantations of bananas, manioc, and sugar-cane. Cattle are regarded as the embodiment of wealth and are the valued property of the few, but the goat is taken as the unit of value, and for a wife a man pays so many “goats,” though the actual payment may take the form of cattle, sheep and goats, the ratio of value of goats to cattle being as 13 to 1. The cattle are grazed on the edge of the cultivation and herded at night in well-guarded enclosures; everything connected with them is done by men and boys. Every wife has her quota of sheep and goats, which at night are kept in the owner's hut.

The word for the Deity, N'gai, is of Masai origin. His dwelling is localized in different places, but especially on Mt. Kenya and in sacred trees (known as *muti mugu*, generally a species of ficus), where sacrifice is offered by the elders. N'gai hears and answers prayer, but the ills of life are attributed to departed spirits, and the medicine man is called in to interpret their desires. In addition to the “orthodox religion” there exists a semi-secret snake cult. The medicine man plays an important part in society, his services being particularly necessary for purification after ceremonial defilement (*thahu*) caused, e.g. by stepping over or touching a



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corpse, digging a grave, eating forbidden food, etc.

A corpse is either thrown out on to uncultivated land or left in the hut for the hyenas to drag away. Burial is reserved for the old and rich, when the grave is dug by the sons of the deceased outside the door of the hut; the body is buried lying on its side with the head to the west, knees drawn up, and head resting on the palm of the right hand if a man, of the left if a woman. The hut is then pulled down on top of the grave.

One of the most mysterious of Kikuyu rites is the symbolical second birth, undergone by both sexes at the age of about 10, and consisting of a dramatization of the birth of the child. Until the new birth has been undergone no individual can be circumcised, inherit property, or take part in the religious rites of the country. If the mother is not living, another woman acts in her place, and in future is looked upon as the mother of the child, and similarly an elder may act as proxy in the place of the father.

The Wachagga, inhabiting the slopes of Kilimanjaro, are a people of composite origin with numerous clans, the majority tracing their descent to a founder of Kamba or Taita stock. They appear to be comparatively recent immigrants, i.e. within the last few hundred years, and even now the country is divided into twenty-eight small states with populations varying from one to twenty thousand inhabitants. The Wachagga are essentially agricultural, with a skilful system of artificial irrigation. Villages do not exist, but each man's home-

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stead is situated in the midst of his banana grove, making a continuous plantation of bananas intersected by hedges of *dracaena*. Chiefship is hereditary, the succession normally passing to the eldest son of the senior wife, and the mother of the chief is treated with the greatest respect. The chief's power is of a despotic nature, though there is, on the whole, little pomp attached to his surroundings, nor is he distinguished by any insignia or symbol of his dignity ; at the present day he governs in conjunction with a body of elders, local heads of clans, but is free to act on his own initiative.

Two types of huts are in use, one conical in shape, and the other a comparatively low hut with slightly curved roof suggesting Masai origin. About half the interior is occupied by a cattle stall, for the Wachagga have many cattle, and owing to the scarcity of grazing (the country being thickly inhabited and largely cultivated) over half the stock is kept stalled in the owners' huts and fed on grass cut and carried from the valley—a work involving much labour. The people are clever workers in wood, and their smiths are skilful and supply iron work largely to the Masai ; the smith's craft is known to certain clans only, but there are no restrictions on intermarriage.

“ Circumcision ” of both sexes is practised and there are elaborate initiation ceremonies. The boys may be circumcised only when a son of the chief arrives at the proper age ; then there is a general circumcision, after which the youths form or join a group called a *rika* to which a specific name is

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given. The institution is derived from the Masai, and establishes a new warrior class. After initiation a girl is shut up in a cage in her mother's hut for three months, fed on fattening food and daily anointed ; at the end of this period she is considered fit for marriage.

At death the corpse is doubled up with the head and legs tied together " to resemble a small barrel." Having been anointed with fat and red ochre it is covered with the hide of a sacrificed bull and placed in the grave in a sitting posture facing the Kibo peak of Kilimanjaro. A man is buried within the hut of his senior wife. About eighteen months after death the bones are exhumed and placed in the banana grove, the skull being taken to the ancestral grove or, in some instances, deposited in an earthen jar. Chiefs are not buried in a hide but in a hollow section of a tree trunk, plugged at the ends, and their death may be kept secret for as long as two years. Formerly childless and unmarried persons and children were not buried but left in the bush for the hyenas.

The Wachagga name for the Supreme Being is Ruwa, also the word for the sun. Ruwa now pays little attention to mankind (though he liberated the first human beings from the vessel imprisoning them), and Wachagga religion is essentially the cult of ancestral spirits, back to the " forgotten ones " who, receiving no sacrifices, gradually disappear. To ancient spirits no sacrifices are offered unless they be founders of clans, " the Lord of the Land," the first to settle in the land. The ancestry is divided

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into those of the right and those of the left ; the spirits of the right-hand side are the more powerful, and their leader is the paternal grandfather, while on the left-hand side the principal spirit is that of the maternal grandfather. Any general calamity is attributed to the anger of the chief's ancestors or to the spirits of the conquered chiefs from whom the country was taken, and these must likewise be appeased.

Of the true eastern (*supra* Ic) division of the Eastern Bantu the Swahili are especially important, since the language they speak has become the lingua franca of a great part of eastern Africa, extending from the western Congo eastwards past the great lakes and out into the ocean to include the north-western coast of Madagascar. The Lamu archipelago is generally acknowledged as the cradle of the tribe, but their territory now extends over a long stretch of the coastal belt—from the Equator to about 16° S.—including Zanzibar and Pemba. They speak a language said to be specially closely akin to Giryama, but it certainly contains many Arabic words and a sprinkling from other languages, including Somali, Portuguese, and Galla, the whole modified by local influences so that at the present day there is a considerable number of dialects. It would then be surprising if it were possible to define the physical characters of the Swahili : an Arab, or at least a man speaking good Arabic, able to read the Koran, and with a mind attuned to Arabic civilization, will call himself a Swahili ; so will a “ black ” with negro features, a flat nose, frizzly

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hair, the descendant, e.g. of a slave mother and an unknown father. The people are then a mixture of mixtures, the African elements having been influenced from the seventh century onwards by a succession of waves from Persia and from the Arabic east. Nor in estimating the physical make-up of the Swahili must it be forgotten that Zanzibar was for many years the greatest slave mart of East Africa.

The Yao (Wayao or Ajawa) believe themselves to be descended from the same stock as the Anyanja ; they originally seem to have inhabited the mountains between Lake Nyasa and the Mozambique coast, whence they were forced into the Shire highlands. Here, in course of time, they settled down side by side with the local population and have intermarried to a great extent with the Anyanja. They are described as a sturdy race, stronger than the Anyanja, with a good proportion of tall men, and are much in request as carriers. They are divided into totemistic clans, each with its own distinctive name.

The Yao chip the edge of the upper incisors into saw-like points and scar their temples. There are initiation ceremonies for both sexes. Marriage is matrilocal, and, as among the Anyanja, the bridegroom, having obtained the consent of the girl and of her relatives (above all of the maternal uncle), builds a house at the bride's home. After the marriage (which is ratified by porridge and a fowl, eaten ceremonially by the parents of both parties) one of the first duties of the bridegroom is to hoe

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a garden for his mother-in-law. Ordinarily a man will have one or two free wives and perhaps four slaves ; if he has more than one free wife he spends his time between their different villages, since each will remain at her home. He inherits the wives of his elder brother, and also of his maternal uncle if the latter has no younger brother living at the time of his death.

Like the Anyanja the Yao believe in a supreme being, Mulungu, who "arranges the spirits of the dead in rows or tiers," and also in special deities of their own connected with the country whence they came, and therefore perhaps ancient chiefs. They also pay a certain amount of reverence to "the old gods of the land," i.e. the spirits of dead Nyanja chiefs (and notably one Kangomba), who haunt the principal mountains whence they were driven in their lifetime by the Yao, and are specially appealed to for rain, so that an Anyanja who can trace connection with Kangomba is often asked by the Yao chief to help him in his supplications. Every village has its "prayer tree" under which sacrifices are offered. There is no priestly class but religious functions are performed "by a chief on behalf of the tribe, by the headman for the village, by the father for the family, and (in private matters) by the individual for himself."

The Anyanja (Mang'anja) extend under several different names from the Shire Valley to the Luangwa and as far north as the middle of Lake Nyasa. At one time they appear to have been continuous in this region, but have been displaced

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and broken up by the intrusions of strange tribes. Owing to blending with other tribes there is much variation in the physical character of the Anyanja, so that it is difficult to fix on a special type ; they are described as of medium height, though tall individuals are fairly common, and one writer lays stress on their small jaws and weak mouths and chins. They have intermarried to a great extent with the Yao and also with the Makololo (originally a Basuto tribe, driven from its home by the Matebele about 1823), while the Anyanja west of the Upper Shire are subject to the Zulu Angoni, with whom they are often confused. The Anyanja have from time immemorial been distinguished as iron-workers.

They believe in the existence of a supreme being, Mpambe or Mulungo, to whom they pray for rain ; in some parts the word means " thunder," and it is also applied to the spirits of the dead, who are propitiated with offerings placed in " spirit huts " about two feet high, made of grass.

The dead are usually buried in groves or thickets, the corpse lying with the legs bent, and the house of the deceased is destroyed and the foundations dug over, but a chief is sometimes buried in his own house, which is then deserted.

## CHAPTER X

### SEMITES

BEFORE discussing the Arabs of Africa it will be necessary to define the meaning to be attached to the term as applied on this continent, and even to say something of its significance in their homeland, Arabia. The traditional Arab of the text-books is long-headed, "with a fine oval face . . . [a] type which . . . often assumes an almost ideal beauty"; yet a glance at literature shows at least as many brachycephals as dolichocephals, while anyone who has travelled in the Sudan knows that most of the Arabs he has met are dark-skinned, often frankly negroid in features, sometimes practically black, with hair that may be almost Negro in quality. Additional difficulty has been caused by the indiscriminate use by the French of the word "Arabe" for any Arabic-speaking African Muhammadan, a practice which, even if it does not add to the confusion in the Nile Valley, undoubtedly does so in Algeria and Morocco, where the majority of so-called Arabs of almost every French anthropologist, from the time of Broca onwards, present little or no evidence of Arab blood and must be regarded not as Arabs but as Berbers (Hamites), who, having adopted the Arabic language and Arab ideas, have



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become more thoroughly arabized than their Berber-speaking countrymen. There still remains the contradiction between the dolichocephalic Arab of literature and the fact that there are round-headed "Arabs" not only in Arabia but also in Tripoli, as shown by a number of skulls in the Museum at Florence. But a solution of the problem is suggested when it is remembered that an ancient Arab cemetery near Cairo has yielded a whole series of skulls which are hyperbrachycephalic, with a cephalic index of over 85, the explanation being that, besides the typical long-headed Arabs of Northern Arabia, the immigrants into the Nile Valley, and no doubt into Tripoli, included natives of Southern Arabia—an area of proved brachycephaly. In later times these Southerners formed part of the force invading Spain, where in their new home the former inhabitants of Yemen and their descendants continued their old-time quarrels with their brethren of Northern Arabia.

It is then obvious that in Africa the term Arab may be applied to any people professing Islam, however much negro or other foreign blood may run in their veins, so that while the term has a cultural value it is of little ethnic significance and often is frankly misleading. Yet, in a broad sense, and excluding the Berbers, the term remains of positive value as denoting a vast series of tribes, "claiming, even if they have it not, a predominant Caucasian ancestry, boasting a particular historic tradition and religion, and speaking a semitic language." In this sense the peoples we call Arab

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contrast with all the other Africans we have discussed in that they exhibit an essentially uniform culture, even if in many instances they can boast but little of the newer immigrant blood to which this culture is attached.

At this stage it will be convenient to consider how the Arabs came to play the important part that they have in Africa. The conquest of Egypt by 'Amr ibn al-Ās in the years 639 to 641, important as were its results from the cultural aspect, cannot have had any great ethnic effect on the population of the Nile Valley. We know that the number of immigrant warriors was not great, and although villages still exist that are said to carry their history back to this, one of the first outpourings of Islam, it may be doubted whether this is much more than a tradition and an example of the constant tendency we meet with in the African to glorify the Asiatic, i.e. the Muhammadan, connection. The great invasions of the eleventh century are on quite a different level; especially does this hold of the migration of the Beni Hillal (and kindred tribes) who in 1048 were launched by the Vizier of the Fatimid Caliph Mustansir against his master's more orthodox vassals in North Africa. Each man was provided with a camel and given a gold piece, the only condition being that he must settle in the west. In two years the invaders had pillaged Cyrenaica and Tripoli and had captured Kairwan, the Beni Hillal for the most part settling in Tripoli and Tunis, while their companions pressed on westwards even into Morocco. This well exemplifies the

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process of arabization in North Africa, and it was to a large extent an eastern and southern reflux from the Hillalian invasion that had most to do with the arabization of the Nile Valley and is thus responsible for much of the present-day distribution of the Arab tribes of the Sudan. How this actually came about is most easily understood by quoting a passage from the great Arab historian, Ibn Khaldūn :

“ At first the kings of the Nuba attempted to repulse them, but they failed ; then they won them over by giving them their daughters in marriage. Thus was their Kingdom disintegrated, and it passed to certain of the sons of the Guhayna on account of their mothers according to the custom of the infidels as to the succession of the sister or the sister's son. So their Kingdom fell to pieces and the A'rab of Guhayna took possession of it. But their rule showed none of the marks of statesmanship because of the inherent weakness of a system which is opposed to discipline and the subordination of one to another. Consequently they are still divided up into parties and there is no vestige of authority in their land, but they remain nomads following the rainfall like the A'rab of Arabia. There is no vestige of authority in their land since the result of the commingling and blending that has taken place has merely been to exchange the old ways for the ways of the Bedouin Arab.”

At the present day the Arabs of Africa are best classified by the obvious common-sense criterion of their mode of life—whether sedentary or nomad—but it is worth remembering that going with this classification are the facts that the purer blooded Arabs are found in the predominantly Caucasian north and east, while in the south and west are those people who, although calling themselves

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Arabs, inhabit areas in which the Negro is or has been dominant, and thus carry much negro blood. Accepting the sociological criterion, three main groups are to be distinguished :

- (1) True nomads (Ahl Ibl, "people of the camel").
- (2) Baqqara, cattle folk, nomad in a more restricted sense.
- (3) Sedentaries, including (a) the Ahl Sawaki, "the people of the Sakia," i.e. the riverain cultivators ; and (b) other settled village folk.

Actually these three classes are not mutually exclusive. Some tribes, such as the Kenana of the Sudan (Anglo-Egyptian), include all three, and many nomad tribes have sedentary sections, or there may even be a limited nomadism, as when a tribe sows its crops in an oasis in the autumn and leads a more or less wandering life until the spring. The distinction between camel-owners and cattle-owners is largely determined geographically, for camels should not as a rule be taken south of latitude  $13^{\circ}$  N., whereas the cattle-owning Baqqara require a better watered and vegetated country, such as is found south of this latitude from the Bahr el Arab westwards to Darfur and Lake Chad.

Tribal organization is far stronger among the nomads than among the sedentaries, who are generally looked down upon by the former unless they belong to a family regarded as particularly holy ; they certainly are, as a rule, less pure blooded than the wanderers. Each tribe is under the control

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of a head Sheikh, and among the nomads consists of a number of sections or divisions, called in the Sudan *khasham beit*, each with its own sheikh. Both offices tend to be hereditary, but are sometimes elective, and where the old tribal organization is still effective all the divisions acknowledge the ultimate authority of the head Sheikh, whose symbol of supreme authority is the *nahas*, the war drum of the tribe, with which is connected considerable ceremonial. Among the sedentary population, as already stated, tribal organization is much weaker, and though importance is still attached to the tribal pedigree a communal organization tends to take the place of the tribal.

It is among the nomads that the purest Arab physical type is found. Here in the rough wastes of north-west Kordofan are the two strongest and richest camel-owning tribes of the Sudan, the Kababish and the Kawahla, age-long rivals, who graze their herds over an area extending west to the Darfur border and south and east among such powerful (predominantly) sedentary tribes as the Dar Hamid. Yet even here there is considerable variation, largely determined by the wealth of the tribe or tribal sections. Among the richer tribes there has been a steady infusion of black blood, proportionate as it seems to the wealth and therefore to the number of slaves found in the division. Thus it comes about that the sheikh of the Kababish is remarkably dark-skinned—as indeed have been his ancestors for some generations—though in the case of the present ruler his features are far from negroid.

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Another variation found among the nomads and no doubt brought in by them from Arabia is the Armenoid nose ; this is by no means uncommon, and, as might be expected, as part of the Caucasian inheritance, seems to be associated with a light skin.

Until measurements of representative tribes of Sudan Arabs have been taken it is impossible to make any general statements as to physical characters, or as to what extent the purer tribes of African Arabs have kept their old physical qualities. In fact, the only data bearing on the subject are a small number of measurements of Kababish and of Aulad Ali. The latter people are of north-eastern Tripoli and are perhaps its strongest tribe ; the measurements of the Kababish were taken both among the sedentary members of the tribe in Dongola and the nomads of Kordofan. All these measurements show a similarity amounting to identity, the more convincing as they were made by different observers who had no knowledge of each other's work :

|                | C.I.  |   | N.I.  |   | Stature   |
|----------------|-------|---|-------|---|-----------|
| Aulad Ali (20) | 75·39 | . | 72·34 | . | 67 inches |
| Kababish of    |       |   |       |   |           |
| Dongola (9)    | 74·5  | . | 68·8  | . | 67½ „     |
| Kababish of    |       |   |       |   |           |
| Kordofan (15)  | 74·13 | . | 70·2  | . | 67 „      |

It should be mentioned that both the Aulad Ali and the Kababish trace their origin to an old Arabian stock, the Beni 'Ukba.

Nothing definite can be said with regard to the physical characters of the sedentary Arabs ; measure-

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ments do not exist, but so far as the Nile Valley north of Khartum is concerned the opinion may be expressed that the majority of riverain tribes are darker-skinned and of a smaller, more slender build, than the nomad Arabs of the south and west.

In Egypt there are still a number of Arab groups sufficiently strong to maintain their old tribal names and organizations, i.e. true Arabs in blood and tradition. The more important of these include:

1. The Ma'aza of the Eastern Desert.
2. The Aulad Ali of the Behera district of the Delta, extending across the frontier into Tripoli as the strongest nomadic tribe of the Tripolitan Desert.
3. The Harabi of the Fayum, still true pastoral nomads and extending as such into the Tripolitan Desert.
4. The fisher-folk of Lake Menzaleh, who are said to trace their origin to Sinai.
5. The Howeitat of Matarieh, now practically sedentary.

All these tribes are dolichocephalic, with average indices ranging from about 73 to 75 and statures of 66 to 67 inches (with the exception of the Harabi, who are somewhat taller). Besides these properly organized peoples there are small groups of tent-dwelling gipsy-like folk, claiming to be Arabs, who wander about the edge of the cultivation in Upper Egypt, usually with a few starveling goats—a people dreaded and disliked by the Fellahin, whom they victimize, in much the same way as gipsies are disliked in our own country.

The Baqqara include a large number of tribes,

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primarily cattle breeders and all nomadic within the limits required to provide water and pasture for their herds. Except where the tsetse fly is prevalent they roam over a large area in the southern Sudan, especially in southern Kordofan and Darfur, extending westwards as far as Lake Chad. Their bulls, which are well-trained and will carry from between 200 to 300 lb., are their most valued possession, and it is on these that their children and baggage are transported during migration. Ethnically, many of the Baqqara tribes carry as much if not more black blood than Arab; the mixture has, however, produced some strikingly handsome individuals, who, although dark-skinned, often have good features, and especially well-formed noses. The Baqqara are, perhaps, the most warlike of the Sudan Arabs, and formed the backbone of the army of the Khalifa, himself belonging to the Ta'aisha, a sub-tribe of the Habbania, which with the Hawazma and Messiria in Kordofan and the Rezayqat in Darfur constitutes one of the most important of the tribes of the Baqqara.

In Nigeria there are Arab colonies at Kano and at such trading centres as Sokoto, Zaria, etc., but much more important than these are the predominantly pastoral Arabs of Bornu, commonly known as Shuwa. Their ancestors, who claimed descent from the Prophet, are known to have been in Darfur and Wadai in the fifteenth century, and no doubt some of the present-day Arabs of these states are of the same stock; other offshoots have lost their identity and have become merged with such Nigerian peoples



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as the Kanuri. In the old days the Shuwa constituted the most important element in the Bornu army, and it was among them that whole troops of horsemen were protected by chain armour, said to date from the Crusades. Their language retains many classical words which have dropped out of the Arab dialects of more civilized Africa, and it is of interest that some of their technical terms are the same as those employed by the Kababish of the Bayuda steppe.

All the Arab tribes with which we have so far been concerned have been in the country probably for centuries, but there is one tribe of recent entry which should be mentioned. Occupying part of the eastern provinces of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan are the Rasheida or Zebediye, noted for their breed of swift reddish-brown riding-camels. With a complexion of light wheaten colour their men are often strikingly handsome, while their good looks are not marred by the face scars with which so many of the Sudan Arabs disfigure their faces. Physically and socially they stand out as entirely un-African, and, indeed, their pedigrees record that the majority of their families have not been in the country for more than a few generations.

With the exception of the Baqqara, who, perhaps on account of their Negro blood, are easily inflamed, neither the Arabs of the eastern nor western Sudan have shown themselves fanatically Muhammadan, nor are they unduly superstitious, the nomad in this respect contrasting strongly with the settled population of the Nile Valley. On the other hand, many

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of the nomads observe customs, e.g. those connected with the dead, which are certainly not Muhammadan and which, if they do not go back to the days of paganism in Arabia, definitely antedate Islam in Africa.

The religious confraternities of Islam, with their allied movements (such as the Mahdiya of the Sudan) have played and still play so large a part in the life of North Africa wherever there is any considerable Arab element that some account—however short—must be attempted, it being realized that the geographical background is a waste and sterile land, with but scattered oases joined by routes so waterless that they can as a rule be traversed only by organized parties, a country propitious to a particular form of religious practice and politico-religious organization. Although most of the orders—named after their various founders—are based on Sufism, the mystical form of Islam, and at their inception were puritan and reformatory in purpose, they have generally before long become strongly political and practical in character, in the same way as did many monastic institutions in Christendom in mediæval times. The constitution is much the same in all instances ; there is a Sheikh or Imam with absolute authority as the direct representative of God and the Prophet, his authority being delegated to local heads. A strict novitiate is often required of adherents, though there are generally many lay members, and such membership need not interfere with ordinary life and work. The local centre, the *zawia* (properly a “retreat”

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or "hermitage") may consist only of a mosque, but is often more extensive, including schools and houses for officials and may be fortified. Naturally *zawia* are built at important halts on the caravan routes, where there is good water, and this enormously enhances their importance. Each fraternity has a "rule" dating back to its founder, and a special ritual which the members perform when they meet together. This may consist only of the repetition of sacred phrases, or may be more elaborate, as, for instance, the whirlings of the "dancing dervishes" (the Mevlevi order) or the performances of the Rifai or "howling dervishes" who, while in a state of ecstasy, eat live coals and glass and cut themselves with knives, as do the Aissawa (Isawiya), a sect widespread in Tripoli. The practices of the Rifai are of special interest; it was their Sheikh who, at the *doseh* ceremony, rode his horse over the bodies of the prostrate devotees, while the belief of this order in their immunity to snake-poison is implicit; thus recently in Egypt a member who was bitten by a poisonous snake was so convinced of his safety that he refused all treatment, with the result that he died within a few hours.

The Senussi sect occupies a unique position among Moslem fraternities, if only on account of the exaggerated importance formerly attributed to it by the French. The first *zawia* of the order was founded in Arabia by Sidi Mohammed ben Ali el Senussi, who after gaining many adherents by his teaching in Cyrenaica settled with his followers in the oasis of Jaghub within the Egyptian frontier,

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where he died in 1859. His son Sidi el Mahdi succeeded him, and with the support of the Sultan of Wadai (then the most powerful Muhammadan state in the Central Sudan) rapidly attained the authority of a temporal sovereign throughout the country, from Darfur, through Wadai and Bornu, to the Tripoli coast; his followers, occupying and cultivating the string of oases leading from Siwa to Wadai—Kufra, Borku, etc.—encouraged trade and maintained order among the wild Bedouin of the desert. Sidi el Mahdi was so called because he possessed the physical characteristics denoting the true Mahdi—blue eyes and one arm longer than the other—but he did not claim this title for himself, and on the rise of the Sudanese Mahdi in 1883 he refused to join the movement and warned his people against it. He came in conflict with the French in 1900, and after a vain attempt to stem their advance at Kanem, was succeeded in 1902 by his nephew; the latter gave up the struggle and retired to Kufra, where he still occupies the position of Sheikh es Senussi, though his abortive attempt against Egypt in 1915–16 lost him much of his prestige.

In the eastern Sahara and Wadai practically all the population are now adherents of the Senussi, and their *zawia* are to be found in all the chief oases and towns. Until the recent Italian advance they jealously maintained their territorial independence in Kufra—the centre of Senussism—and in general have made travel difficult for Europeans in the regions they control. Although, in a sense, an outcome of the Wahabi movement, the sect is not

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mystical or excessively puritan (though coffee and tobacco are rigorously forbidden) and apart from proselytism and the revival of a purer form of Islam, the chief desire of its members has been to be left to themselves. Yet their strong organization and the inclusion among them of men of a higher and wealthier class than in most fraternities has brought them into prominence as a political and military force, sometimes, as it would seem, against the wish of their leaders.

Apart from the Hamitic Falasha described in Chapter V, Jews other than recent immigrants from Europe are confined to North Africa. The Sephardim, the descendants of the Jews expelled from Spain and Portugal at the end of the fifteenth century, generally exhibit the physical characters of their *confrères* still living in Europe. The "indigenous" Jews of North Africa are for the most part low mesaticephals with an average cephalic index (Tunis) of 78.

The Jewesses of Algeria and Tunisia have generally been considered pleasing :

"many can even be called beautiful. Their big black eyes are full of expression, their long black hair and vivacious features give them a charming appearance. But their size is appalling ; most of them are rather over than under two hundred pounds, and they have absolutely no shape. But this is in accordance with the Oriental notion of feminine beauty. . . ."

The long isolated Jews of the Oasis of M'zab in southern Algeria are described as dolichocephals

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with a cephalic index (living) of 73. Whether this is accurate or not, there is no doubt that North African Jews are far more dolichocephalic than their European co-religionists, the percentage (living) being of the following order :

| C.I.  |   | Europe |   | N. Africa |
|-------|---|--------|---|-----------|
| -80   | . | 25     | . | 71        |
| 80-85 | . | 66     | . | 28        |

while it may be interesting to add that of Yemenite Jews some 93 per cent. have a cephalic index under 80.

One other cultural wave has reached Africa. Outrigger canoes, essentially Indonesian, are found on the island of Zanzibar and the neighbouring coast. These must be regarded as an extreme cultural extension westwards of the Indonesian element of Madagascar, though there is no evidence of the admixture of this foreign stock with the natives of Africa.

## APPENDIX I

### LITERATURE

In the following list, books that the author has found especially useful are indicated by an asterisk. A dagger denotes larger or more technical works, suitable for reference or for use by the advanced student. Except for West Africa, books by travellers and explorers of the eighteenth and much of the nineteenth century are omitted, their interest being in the main geographical rather than anthropological.

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## APPENDIX II

Conversion table in inches and metres of heights between 5 and 6 feet (correct to about a quarter of an inch).

| Metres. | Inches.            | Metres. | Inches.            |
|---------|--------------------|---------|--------------------|
| 1.52 .  | . 60               | 1.68 .  | . 66               |
| 1.53 .  | . 60 $\frac{1}{4}$ | 1.69 .  | . 66 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| 1.54 .  | . 60 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 1.70 .  | . 67               |
| 1.55 .  | . 61               | 1.71 .  | . 67 $\frac{1}{4}$ |
| 1.56 .  | . 61 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 1.72 .  | . 67 $\frac{3}{4}$ |
| 1.57 .  | . 61 $\frac{3}{4}$ | 1.73 .  | . 68               |
| 1.58 .  | . 62               | 1.74 .  | . 68 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| 1.59 .  | . 62 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 1.75 .  | . 69               |
| 1.60 .  | . 63               | 1.76 .  | . 69 $\frac{1}{4}$ |
| 1.61 .  | . 63 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 1.77 .  | . 69 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| 1.62 .  | . 63 $\frac{3}{4}$ | 1.78 .  | . 70               |
| 1.63 .  | . 64               | 1.79 .  | . 70 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| 1.64 .  | . 64 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 1.80 .  | . 71               |
| 1.65 .  | . 65               | 1.81 .  | . 71 $\frac{1}{4}$ |
| 1.66 .  | . 65 $\frac{1}{4}$ | 1.82 .  | . 71 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| 1.67 .  | . 65 $\frac{3}{4}$ | 1.83 .  | . 72               |

Ninety-five per cent. of the measurements which the student will meet fall between these limits ; larger or smaller measurements stated in the metric system are easily converted if it be remembered that 1 inch almost equals 2.5 cm. and that 6 inches is approximately 15 cm.



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